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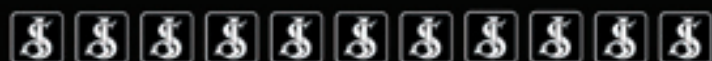
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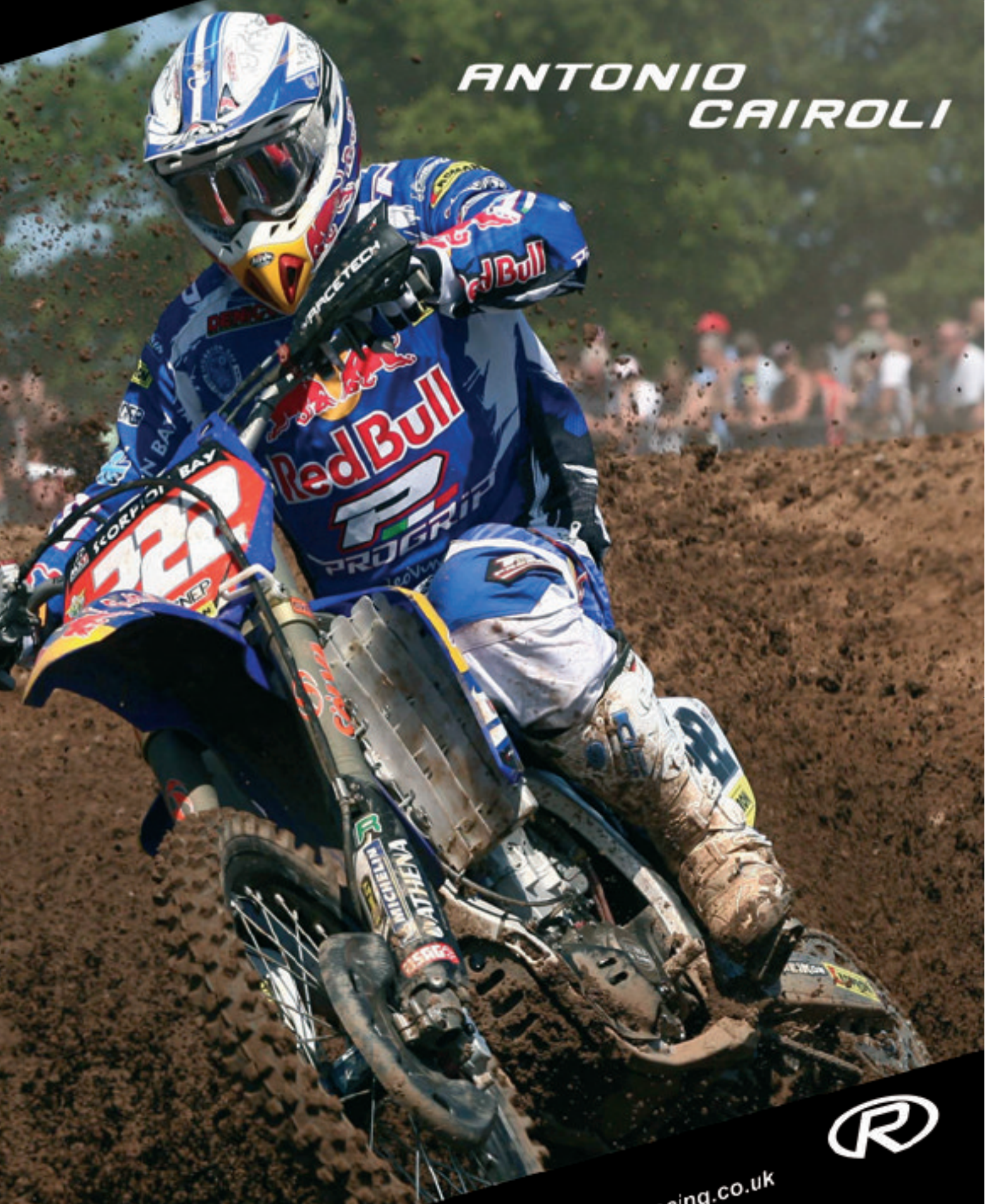


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COVER: T-bone Tony Cairoli is one of the most stylish mutha-truckers in MX1 and despite not having the best of weekends at the British GP still looked as cool as a cucumber riding the Red Bull De Carlo Yamaha
© Suttty

CONTENTS: Tony's tantalisingly fast team-mate Tanel Leok – aka the Estonian Express – kicks up a storm during free practice at Mallory Park
© Suttty

COMMENT

There are few things finer than a British GP on a sunny day. And Mallory Park was most definitely blessed with the sort of weather that makes a man want to strip to the waist, sink a few cold cans and go lobster pink as he cheers on the Brits while they bang bars with the best MX riders in the world.

For decency's sake I decided to keep my kit on – although a lot of people who should have didn't – and as I had my professional head on I stayed away from all things alcoholic – although a lot of people who should have didn't. I even packed some factor 10 so I maintained my classic English rose complexion. Of course, I've not always been so well behaved in the past but I'd more than compensated for this abstinence the previous day when I'd cut loose at a family wedding and behaved in what civilised society would deem an inappropriate manner.

My uncle's ill-time nuptials meant I missed the supermoto races and the traditional Saturday night GP cider-fest so when I rolled up on the Sunday morning I was coming in cold having absorbed bugger all in the way of pre-match atmosphere. And to be honest I was gutted – much as I love my mad uncle Mart there's no doubt that GPs are weekend events and just doing the Sunday left me feeling short-changed. Strictly speaking he's only my half uncle so I guess I can blame the non-Lawless blood in him for A) refusing to change the date of his wedding and then B) insisting I bloody well turn up. Anyway, enough rambling...

So myself and JD – T+MX Editor and my chauffeur for the day – rolled up at Mallory and the first thing I noticed was that although the roads leading to the circuit were narrower than Hank Hills' urethra we were waved more or less straight in. This is a good thing and a bad thing. Good because I hate sitting around in traffic on a hot day but bad because, er, where the hell was everyone? Admittedly, it was pushing 10am so most of the diehard fans would already be there – no doubt many of them who didn't have awkward uncles were doing the job properly and making a weekend of it – but anyone who remembers the traffic chaos that used to go hand-in-hand with a Foxhill GP will know that this still wasn't a good sign.

By the time we'd parked, picked up our passes and made our way down to the trade area it was getting close to the start of the first veteran's race and it still hardly what you'd call 'thronging' – despite the prospect of seeing Robbie Herring back in action on a GP track. And the sad fact is that even though by the time the MX2 riders came to the line for their first race a lot more people had either turned up that morning or, bleary-eyed, made their way down from the campsites it still wasn't the sort of crowd you expect at a British GP.

Promoting an event of this size takes big hairy boys – and an even bigger wad of wonga – and Gareth Hockey and RHL Activities deserve great respect for having the courage to step-up and stage a GP. But I can't help wondering how much longer promoters will be willing to take such big financial risks if this is the way things are going. The event itself was great – we didn't have a winner but the likes of Swordy, Billy Mac and especially Ando in the first MX1 moto ensured there was lots of reasons for the home fans to shout themselves hoarse – but where was the crowd?

It's a tough one this because there's no easy answer – times have changed, we're in a recession and even hardcore MX fans can be tempted to get their fix in much cheaper, readily available ways. I could for instance have stayed at home and watched the GPs live on Motors TV or hooked up to Freecaster and watched live over the internet.

So what will happen? And what's the solution – if indeed there is a solution? The size of the licensing fee promoters have to pay Youthstream means they need to get people through the gate if they're going to have any chance of making a few quid from a hell of a lot of hard work. But what sort of businessman will be willing to take a chance on something so risky? When Gareth Hockey took over the British GP last year it looked like that after a procession of promoters we were in for a period of stability. But after last weekend's GP who would blame him if he dropped it like a hot shog dite and concentrated on his bread and butter event at Weston? I certainly wouldn't...

Sean



A practice crash has counted Jon Barragan out of the French GP

NEWSHOUND!

DEPUTY DAWG'S DIRTY DELIVERY OF OFF-ROAD NEWS...

If you had over 25 grand burning a hole in your pocket what would you buy? Obviously you'd blow it all on an 833-year subscription to DBR but there is (or rather was) an equally as cool alternative available – this totally awesome FIM race licence held by none other than the King of Cool Steve McQueen.

Sold at an auction house in California, the 1964 international trials and scrambles licence actually sold for a whopping **42,700USD** – that's **£26,412.28** at the current exchange rate – and raised significantly more than a 1929 Harley-Davidson the iconic film legend owned before his sad demise in 1980.

One man who probably hasn't got a donkey choker big enough to spend on such things right now is British GP promoter Gareth Hockey who despite pulling out all the stops to make Mallory a motocross masterpiece has to have taken another financial thrashing on the back of the one he took on the chin at the Handlebar Festival. With crowd figures down on last year's event – which definitely ran at a loss – could this be the end of the Welshman's dream to bring world championship motocross to the UK? Only time will tell...

Speaking of GPs and stuff, when was the last time a world championship leader changed teams mid-season was the big question being asked at Mallory Park as Marvin Musquin turned out in Red Bull factory KTM colours after ditching his NGS Honda team mid-week. The answer is of course never before but a question remains – what made Marv make history?

A rumoured cash flow problem in the NGS squad is rumoured to have meant that Marv was rumoured to not be getting his monthly meal vouchers. So rather than stay red – with a little financial help from Paulo Martin's team – and risk starving to death the already undernourished looking 19-year-old decided to jump ship to the factory KTM squad.

It was all obviously a done deal way before Marv even left France for England although nobody had told the NGS team who had a pair of bikes ready and waiting for the championship leader – as did KTM. In the end it was the #25 KTMs that were pushed through technical control leaving the privateer NGS crew riderless and feeling bitterly disappointed – sacre bleu!

Somebody else left disappointed by the British GP weekend was CAS Honda's PR guru – and badass beat keeper – Jenni Dick who unfortunately had most of her personal belongings stolen from her van on the Sunday night after the race. The main item taken in the robbery was Jen's pride and joy – a 2006 model CR125 with a rather unusual 20 inch front rim and the chassis number JH2ME03A25M900218.

As well as her mean machine quite a lot of her personal belongings were taken too including mobile phones, laptops and a rather rare pair of bright pink CTI2s. If you know the whereabouts of any of Jen's stuff then please call Leicestershire police on **0116 222 2222** quoting crime reference number **SH03466096**.

Jonathan Barragan joined the huge list of MX1 riders MIA – Kevin Strijbos, Steve Ramon, Marc De Reuver, Seb Pourcel, Cedric Melotte and David Vuillemin – just in time for the French GP at Ernee. It seems that the Spanish Silver Action KTM star had a bit of a training accident which resulted in some serious injuries to his ribs and spleen. Barragan should be back in time for the German GP at Teutschenthal although it's looking likely he'll slip down the standings from his current third place.

High flying FMX action makes a triumphant return to **Margam Park** in South Wales on **July 15** as the Big Air Jam comes to visit. With Britain's best freestylers scheduled to appear it should be one hell of a show – for more details log on to **www.bigairjam.com**.

That freestyle fest should be the perfect



Top freestyle returns to Wales in July



Musquin goes from red to orange

Don't miss Paul Bolton in extreme enduro action at Dirt 3-2-1



DREAMJOB!

R&D FOR RENTHAL

Every now and again a career opportunity pops up which – to the right person – is just about as close to being a dream job as it gets. For designer Large Marge it would be Stella Artois taster, for Suttly a similar role with Hollands Pies would be right up his street. For Sean a combination of both would tick all the boxes.

And if you're an experienced R&D engineer how does a job with Renthal grab you? It really does sound too good to be true but the Stockport-based company are looking for just the man (or woman) to help them to continue to expand their product range.

Obviously, you're not just going to be able to walk into the job on the back of making your own bikestand in the garden shed. In fact, you'll be wasting your time sending off a CV unless you meet the following criteria.

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- A passion for and knowledge of motorcycles and/or cycles

If you fit the bill send your CV and a covering letter to mail@renthal.com

warm up to the summer's biggest and best off-road event and that's the DBR/TMX/FatCat Motoparc-promoted **Dirt 3-2-1** festival that will be going off huge at Armthorpe in Yorkshire over the weekend of **July 17/18/19**.

It's all set to be a fabulous weekend of frolics and fun with proceedings kicking off on the Friday where you're invited to come and Practice with the Pros. Not only will you be able to burn some hot laps with top riders including STR Honda's Jordan Rose and Nathan Parker, DB Racing's Neville Bradshaw and more good guys who we haven't nailed down just yet but you'll be able to pick up some sweet riding tips from them too! And if that's not enough we'll have some of the sport's best spanner spinners on hand to help set up your machines as well.

After a relaxing day of riding on Friday, Saturday's the big 'un at **Dirt 3-2-1** as we'll have supercross and endurocross racing running late into the night as well as an afternoon ladies' trial for you to check out as well. The competition vibe stays alive on Sunday with motocross racing for everyone – that's youth, amateurs, women and experts. There's **£2500** worth of prize money up for grabs over the weekend and some stunning awards too so get yourselves entered now before we become over-subscribed.

Of course, **Dirt 3-2-1** is not all about on-track activities because we'll have a bunch of other stuff going including a trade village, some fine eateries (foo and rinks for all!) and also a chance for newcomers to the sport to have a go in our novice experience sessions.

Entrance to the event for spectators is a measly £5 on Saturday and Sunday (under 10s are free) with Friday being totally free for everyone! **FatCat Motoparc** is situated just off **Junction 4** of the **M18** so it's easy to get to...

More information – as well as those all important entry forms – is available online at www.dirt321.co.uk or you can call **01524 834030** during normal office hours if you'd prefer to speak to a friendly human type person before revolting robots kill all our asses with poisonous gases.



WHERE'SCYRIL?

FIND DESPRES AND WIN A SHARK SKIDDER

This month thanks to the fine folk at Nevis Marketing we've got another top-of-the-range **Shark SXR Cyril Despres** replica skid lid worth a whole **£229.99** to give away.

Thanks to the awesome hiding powers of our designer **Large Marge** we've chopped the noggin off the French rally raid legend and secretly secreted it elsewhere in the pages of this issue of DBR (the one above is a serving suggestion for illustration purposes only). If you can spot it then you could win the helmet – simple, eh?

All you have to do is locate Cyril's napper and then text the word **DBRCYRIL** followed by a space, the page number, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **June 9** with the first correct entry chosen randomly getting the skidder in a size to suit.

Terms and conditions:

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GOLDENPAD

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If you're going to be bangin' bars with your buddies you want to be sure the ones you're clinging onto don't fold faster than **Deputy Dawg's** deckchair. And they won't if you win our b(a)rilliant competition!

Have a close look at our pic of this golden **Renthal** bar pad, then flick through this month's mag and find the full pic we've taken it from. Once you've found it simply text the word **DBRRENT** followed by a space, the page number it appears on, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **July 9** with the first correct entry chosen at random getting a pair of Renthal handlebars of their choice...



© Ugg Mitter/Red Bull Photofiles

HOLY COW!

With a couple o' days spare in his hectic schedule living FMX legend Robbie Maddison headed out into the Canadian wilderness to entertain some cattle and country folks – yes sirree! With the yokels well and truly blown away and the cows mooing their appreciation the 28-year-old Aussie then packed up his pick-up, headed into town and decimated the competition at the latest round of the Red Bull X-Fighters... Speaking of which add this date to your diary – August 22. That's when the world's finest freestylers come to Battersea Power Station on London's South Bank. Log on to www.redbullxfighters.com for more information...



GORDON CROCKARD

BACK IN THE SADDLE!

AFTER HIS DEATH DEFYING CRASH IN MARCH GORDY'S BACK ON TWO WHEELS – ALL HE'S MISSING IS AN ENGINE BETWEEN THEM...

Words by Gordon Crockard Photo by Nick Moores

So another month of no motorbike riding for me but I have been out on the road putting miles on the legs on the road bicycle and mountain bike too. The weather has been mega lately for it and I have realised just exactly how solar-powered I actually am. Quite too much I would say considering where I live in the world and if you don't already know what the weather is usually like in Norn Iron (Northern Ireland) then I can tell you the sun doesn't shine too often.

I went to Italy to spend a bit of time in the sun cycling and getting fit. It was fantastic and I loved it. I stayed with Nick Moores who I have fond memories of from my glory days on the GP trail. Nick was the man responsible for giving me the machinery I wanted and needed to win my first GP and first British championship title. He was Neil Prince's mechanic in 1999 and did my motors and suspension that year too.

Neil and I were 250 GP team-mates for CAS Honda that year and somehow I managed to end up with Nick becoming my direct mechanic for the year 2000. That changed my career completely as he was and still is the only guy to be able to give me the bike set-up I want. We worked together very well and won two British championships back-to-back and four GPs. We climbed up the world rankings to as high as third (two points off second) and both got signed up by the factory KTM team. That team was excellent but the bike was terrible. Our results sucked and three GP podiums were the highlight of the season.

Nick stayed at KTM for the following year and I went back to CAS. My results picked up to a good level again and for the following year (2004) I got Nick convinced to be my mechanic again. All was going brilliant and then I destroyed my knee in a crazy deep mud race at the opening British championship of the year. I was out for four months and had a huge fall out with the CAS team. I left the team and Nick and our rider/mechanic relationship was over. He stayed at CAS for one more year and at the end of that season he got an offer to work at Alpinestars as the lead man in their Racing Development department. He took the offer and has been there ever since.

He lives in Italy and races mountain bikes as his hobby. He even rides for a team and has sponsors! I went out to visit and train with him at the end of May and I'm embarrassed to say that a former mechanic of mine is currently fitter than me. How back to front is that? It won't be the case for much longer as I'm on a mission to sort

that out and get myself back to my previous strength. Application and commitment is all I need to make it happen. I've had to do it plenty of times before so I'm no stranger to getting through the emotional side of it.

The Italian lifestyle is quite different to the Newtownards way of life, that's for sure. I took a few lessons by mistake. Simple stuff I took for granted like when the food shops open and close etc. No 24-hour Tescos over there or Sunday openings!

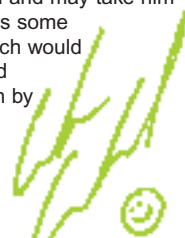
Johnny Douglas Hamilton is over staying with me for 10 days to build my MX practice track into a dreamland fantasy playground for adult dirt riders. Can you imagine how excited I am to get healthy and get riding on it? I will ride my bike not long after this goes to print and I will know straight away once I ride how my back is going to feel. I'm going to start with some steady trail/free/enduro riding to get a gentle introduction back into handlebar time. I still attend fairly hefty physio sessions on my back every week and I do have daily pain to manage from it.

I'm at exactly three months now and itching to be back on it. It drives me nuts seeing the results from the races I should have been doing. All that (my) prize money going into everybody else's pockets bar mine. Not good! I brought my race bike home from Brampton when I was there spectating and have it sitting in my workshop ready to go. I was trying very hard and really hoping to be able to be strong and pain free enough to be on the startline for the next British championship which is to be held on June 14 at Hawkstone Park where I got smashed up on March 1. That was a tad ambitious I must admit but I really wanted to do that and get stuck into those feckers taking all the glory at the moment.

I didn't make it to Mallory Park for the British GP but I did watch it on the TV. I can't say I would have liked to be riding I must confess. It didn't look that attractive to ride from my armchair.

My old GNCC mate David Knight is badgering me to get over to the Isle Of Man for the TT races. I've never been and may take him up on the offer as he also has some awesome practice tracks which would be just the ticket if I'm up and running on the MX bike again by the time I go over.

Right, I better craic on and get my ass back to the track to help Johnny work on the 'dozer...



WIN! WIN! WIN!

YEAR'S SUPPLY OF TYRES UP FOR GRABS!*

Aren't tyres brilliant! Without them we'd be stuffed as our bare rims spin into the dirt, helplessly failing to find grip. Don't believe us? Well think about every race you've ever seen – all the winners had one thing in common, huh? Yep, they were using tyres! Tyres rock! And **Blackrock tyres** rock even more – and not just because they've got 'rock' in their name (although that helps – in the same way as heavy rock rocks).

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Is it:

- A: Bedrock
- B: Glam Rock
- C: Heavy Rock
- D: Death Metal

Think you know the answer? Then hook up to www.dirtbikerider.com where you need to follow the competition link, type in your answer, fill out the fields and hit transmit. Entries close on **July 9** with the first correct entry chosen totally at random getting the tyres...



GOBBO

Sean Lawless
sean.lawless@dirtbikerider.co.uk
Tel: 01524 834077
Fax: 01524 425469

SALT AND PEPPER BADGER

Anthony Sutton
anthony.sutton@dirtbikerider.co.uk

BUM CHIN

Andrew Marginson
andrew.marginson@dirtbikerider.co.uk

CREATIVE TYPES

Graham Austin
Gary Houghrain

AMERICAN BLOKE

Steve Cox
www.coxmx.com

LEGEND OF LATE COPY

Geoff Walker
geoffwalkerdb@btinternet.com

YOUTH EDITOR

Mike Gurney
mikegurney55@yahoo.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS

Jonty Edmunds, Stevie Mills, Roger Harvey,
Stephen Sword, Gordon Crockard, Billy MacKenzie,
Jack Burnicle, Neil Drew, Steve Matthes, JP O'Connell,
Max Anstie, David Knight, Mark Turner, Alex Hodgkinson,
Sarah Gutierrez

NEW MEDIA MANAGER

Jude Oakley

QUEEN OF COMMERCIAL

HRH Debs Stuchbury
debs.stuchbury@dirtbikerider.co.uk
01524 834007

EVIL SIDEKICK

Sarah Hodgkinson

ROCKIN' BEATS PRODUCER

Ricky "find me on Facebook" Wilkinson
richard.wilkinson@dirtbikerider.co.uk
01524 834013

ADVERTISING

Phil Armitage
phil.armitage@dirtbikerider.co.uk
Sophie Elder
sophie.elder@dirtbikerider.co.uk
01524 834012

MERCHANDISING AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Anne Pardula
www.dirtbikerider.co.uk
01524 834066

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www.dirtbikerider.com



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STEPHEN SWORD

PMA!

IT'S BEEN A TOUGH START TO THE SEASON FOR SWORDY BUT HE'S STAYING STRONG WITH A POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE

Words by **Stephen Sword** Photo by **Sutty**

Well another month has passed with yet more ups but mainly downs. Usually I go straight in to telling you about the races – however this month what can I say except it's going S**T! Everyone keeps asking why and I am finally starting to figure it out.

I have been struggling with the bike and the team has been doing all they can to help me and the situation. It's all starting to come together and I know I am capable of being at the front. I am embarrassed with my results this year and riding at the back where I know I should not be. It's time for me to turn the situation around and do what needs to be done. So that is what I am focusing on doing from now on. I will do it!

Portugal was a track I was looking forward to riding – back in '04 it was where I had the first GP race win of my career. However, it was not to be repeated! Instead once again I had two races where I struggled to find my form and they were crap results by my standards. But I have been taking some of the positives from the races to make me a stronger rider when I find my form again. It's much harder as a rider to come from the back and not give up. You have highs and lows in any sport – it's just how you chose to deal with them – and I'm turning them into positives to make myself stronger.

The next weekend we were racing in Spain and it started on a bad note. In the qualifying race I had a big crash in the first corner and hurt my neck, back and wrist. I remounted but could only manage to get up to 27th – once again making Sunday a tough race from the start with my grid position. In the first race I crashed and did not end up in the points and the second race I managed to come through the pack to 12th which I was pleased with as I worked hard to get through the pack with the injuries I was carrying. I went home with a long list of problems I wanted to get sorted ready for Mallory as I knew things had to change.

We then had a weekend off and I trained hard all week so I could spend Sunday with Jodie and Ayrton. It was a really hot day so we decided to go into Bath for some shopping and to eat at Jamie Oliver's restaurant. In addition, we had to get Ayrton's passport pictures done which did not go as easily as we first thought but we got there in the end. The food was nice – I will be going back again

for sure – and we had such a cool day and Jodie didn't cane the credit card too hard! The little man is great and I must say he looks just like me – lucky boy (and I'm not just talking about his face)! He's in bed at the moment and when I typed that sentence he made a noise in agreement on the baby monitor.

The week leading up to Mallory my mechanic Wayne came over to do testing on the engine. We went out for three days which I feel helped me a lot. One day we just practised starts as mine have been well under par all year. The other days we tested and I also got my motos in. I felt we had taken a small step forward and was beginning to look forward to Mallory. I also went and represented Fox at a ride day at Apex Moto Park. It was a good turn out and I was able to do some riding and really enjoyed the day. They are a great team to be sponsored by so cheers for the invite.

Mallory was finally here and it was Ayrton's first trip in the camper but, more importantly, it was his first GP. We arrived on the Thursday night so it was not a rush in the morning, plus they had supermoto all day Friday. First of all I really would like to thank all the fans that were cheering me on. What a great feeling it was seeing everyone around the track being so loyal to the British riders – especially as I've not been on form this year yet. So thanks again.

The qualifying race was not the best but I came from 30th to 18th so not a big disaster for the grid position. Sunday was really hot which has never affected my riding so I was really looking forward to racing. The first race I ended up 13th – I went back from seventh so as you can imagine I was not happy. For the second race we changed a lot with the suspension and it was much better. I gated second but dropped back to fourth which I felt comfortable in. I had a nice gap between myself and fifth but I had a small crash in a corner and went back to sixth place and that's where I stayed until the finish.

I was pleased with the race knowing that my lap times were good and that I managed to turn things around after a bad first race. Ayrton loved the racing so much that he slept through the whole day – even up in the pits where it's really loud. Already used to bikes I think!


dirtbikerider 15

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Words by JP O'Connell photo by Suttty

Q: I'm going to be six next month and want to do my first race – if you could go back to when you started what is the best advice you could give me?

Jack Goss, Stoford

A: "Practice and learn to start because I didn't and I had three races and three loop-outs off the gate at my first race!"

Q: Why did you quit the GPs and how long do you see yourself racing on the national scene?

Pete Simmons, Berks

A: "I quit GPs because of the cost of doing them and I don't really agree with how it all works now. I've done 13 seasons at it and seen a lot of changes. Also, I felt a change was needed to give myself some fresh challenges. I will keep racing for as long as I'm able to still fight to win."

Q: Since you opted to only race in this country you have been on fire – do you think you still have a British championship in you?

Jack Wakely, South Petherton

A: "Thanks Jack and, yeah, 100 per cent. I feel better this year than I've done in a while. I want an MX1 title and I'm working on it."

Q: What was it like having your dad as your coach when you were growing up?

Josh Connery, Jersey

A: "I wouldn't say he coached me as such, he taught me a lot and still does. You never stop learning. He sees stuff sometimes during races that I wouldn't see and he tells me after. He's always helped me when he thought necessary without being too full-on and let me make my own decisions. He's been around the sport a lot longer than me. It's good to have someone with a lot of experience to learn from."

Q: Just how instrumental was 'Angry' Geoff Walker in your career?

Geoff Walker, Colerne

A: "Very good Geoffrey! For those that don't know Geoff lived with us for a few years and worked on my bikes also. We spent a lot of time travelling and racing together and I value his opinion on things a lot. He built my practice track and roughed me up pretty good on the basketball court when we were younger. He seemed like nine foot tall when I was 13 years old."

Q: Have you made any plans for when you finally retire from motocross?

Jason Hennessey, Gravesend

A: "I've got a few ideas. I'm doing some coaching stuff at the moment but I will wait to

see what time brings. Me and dad are planning to build a track pretty soon but right now I still love racing so I don't think too much about it."

Q: Do you have any regrets as regards your career?

Gary Owens, Cardiff

A: "No! People make mistakes but why dwell on the past?"

Q: After all those years on a 125/250F why the move to the 450s?

Neil Macraill, Honiton

A: "Fresh challenge I guess. I just felt the time was right to give it a shot."

Q: Career wise which year stands out for you as the best and why?

Vicky Wey, East Dulwich

A: "1998 because that was when I started to podium at GPs and realised my effort was paying off."

Q: What are your thoughts on home schooling?

Mike Stringer, Manchester

A: "Don't really agree, I never did it but I know a lot of people do. School is an important part of growing up and apart from everything else you learn at school you learn discipline and routine."

Q: If you were able to relive your racing career what, if anything, would you do differently?

Steve Taylor, Ipswich

A: "Maybe consider the American option more but other than that I'd probably do it all over again."

Q: As your dad raced in the US did you ever feel tempted to have a crack over there?

Steve Squires, Bath

A: "Of course. Everyone thinks about it at some point I guess but the time was never right for me. I did a National at Steel City in '99 and enjoyed it but never made the switch."

Q: I was at Matchams when you won a GP moto in '05 on the KTM – how good did that feel to win in front of your home crowd?

Tom Paulley, Swindon

A: "It was awesome and something I'll never forget. Having all the British fans willing you to win is the best and gives you that little bit more strength when you need it."

Q: Of all the bikes you've ridden during your career which was the one that suited you best?

Adam Drummond, Coventry

A: "I've rode some really good bikes and some bad ones but I think the way I'm enjoying things right now it would have to be my MVR-D Suzuki 450."

Q: If you were to win a British championship and a reasonable offer came in to race the GPs again would you consider it or is it all over in your mind?

Spence Nicklin, Portland

A: "I would have to consider it but after 13 years of GPs I was getting tired of all the travelling and now I have three children I'm around a lot more for them. When I raced Mallory I enjoyed it a lot for a one-off but it didn't cross my mind to do the series."



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SILVER SURFERS!

FOR THIS MONTH'S COJONES WEIGH-IN WE PIT SILVER ACTION KTM'S MX1 STAR JONATHAN BARRAGAN AGAINST HIS MX2 TEAM-MATE GERT KRESTINOV

Words and photo by JP O'Connell

As a proud Englishman I enjoy the fact that whichever country I'm in I only have to speak slower and louder for the locals to understand me – that is until you try and explain slippers to a Spaniard and an Estonian. Luckily for me Silver Action KTM's Jonathan Barragan and Gert Krestinov are infinitely less ignorant than me and made my job easy(ish)...

DBR: Who would you like to play you in a film of your life?

GK: "Maybe Brad Pitt as he gets to play with Angelina Jolie!"

JB: "It would be the Spanish actor Santiago Segura."

DBR: When did you last clean an air-filter?

GK: "That was two weeks ago when I was alone training in Holland."

JB: "About a week ago – honest!"

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?

GK: "No, no, I know nothing about the inside of the engine – I am a pussy!"

JB: "Yes I could."

DBR: Have you ever eaten anything that you have killed?

GK: "Nothing I have killed with my bare hands but my uncle is a hunter so I have eaten things he has killed."

JB: "No, never in my life."

DBR: How many bones have you broken?

GK: "It's got to be seven but I have had plenty of other injuries including a dislocated shoulder and I broke some nerves, I am quite an injured rider!"

JB: "Only two or three, knock on wood!"

DBR: Can you eat spaghetti without a spoon?

GK: "Yes, just a fork."

JB: "Ah I see, no just with one fork!"

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?

GK: "Definitely chocolate and many sweet things."

JB: (Laughing) "I eat what I want – McDonalds, Pizza Hut, anything [other fast foods are available – JP]..."

DBR: Do you own a pair of slippers?

GK: "Ah, I understand – no I don't!"

JB: "No, in Spain it is normal to just keep your shoes from the street on."

DBR: You're second and on the leader's rear wheel – do you take him out in the last corner for the win?

GK: "If I had the possibility of the overall win then yes."

JB: "Yeah, if I am close then yes!"

DBR: What is the highlight of your career so far?

GK: "For sure it was the GP win in Lommel last year – people were like 'who the f**k is this guy!' It was also my 18th birthday so it was a good present."

JB: "Winning Lommel last year was the best point for me."

DBR: What car do you drive?

GK: "I have sponsorship with Subaru so I have an Impreza turbo."

JB: "I have a BMW X5."

DBR: And if money were no object?

GK: "At this moment I like sports cars so maybe something like a Porsche but in the future maybe something bigger."

JB: "Definitely a Ferrari."

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?

GK: "I would like to change to a more aggressive riding style – sometimes when I get passed I let the rider go too easily."

JB: "I would love to have more hair!"

DBR: What's the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk.

GK: "Maybe when I fell over into a load of mud!"

JB: "I have been drunk and done some stupid things – I can't remember what I did though!"

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

GK: "I think a nice woman, a motocross bike and lots of food and drink."

JB: "One girl, two girls, three girls!"

DBR: What's your favourite film?

GK: "The World's Fastest Indian with Anthony Hopkins."

JB: "I don't really have a favourite film."

DBR: Where's your favourite place on earth?

GK: "I enjoy myself the most back home in Estonia at my parents' house."

JB: "Madrid."

DBR: Do you have any fears or phobias?

GK: "I don't like small rooms with no windows or doors, like lifts. I'm also not keen on flying and heights."

JB: "I don't like reptiles."

DBR: What's your most prized possession?

GK: "My family."

JB: "I have some special things – my money, my watches, my car. I think it would be my Bvlgari watch."

DBR: Have you ever been in a fight?

GK: "Not in a fight, just lots of arguments!"

JB: "Yes! Sometimes I win, sometimes not!"

DBR: Which was the best race you've been in?

GK: "Lommel when I won."

JB: "Lommel last year."

DBR: Is winning a race better than sex?

GK: (Laughing) "At this moment maybe yes!"

JB: "It depends. If it's a big race then yes."

DBR: How do you have your steak?

GK: "Medium."

JB: "Well done."

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

GK: "It depends. Sometimes blonde, sometimes brunette – at the moment it's brunette though."

JB: "Brunette."

DBR: Something about yourself that nobody else knows?

GK: "I started riding motorcycles when I was three years old."

JB: "I like to relax and chill out with my friends – you know, eat and drink. I have no sporting hobbies."

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Graeme Irwin hits the eject button at Mallory



WASHOUT!

THE TRACK'S PERFECTLY PREPPED AND THE ENTRIES ARE IN – THEN RAIN STOPS PLAY AT FAIRYHOUSE. NO WONDER IRELAND'S SO GREEN...

Words by **Stevie Mills** Photo by **Sarah Gutierrez**

I am sure you've all heard the saying 'timing is everything' – well here is just such an example...

Trevor Callaghan and his band of hard-working track builders grafted by moonlight to resurrect last year's Irish Grand Prix circuit to its previous world class condition. They didn't really have a choice as since the announcement that mere mortals of motocross would have the chance to ride in the ruts of the GP elite excitement was near on fever pitch!

With the track prepared and a record entry booked in, all that remained were two days of bliss – except monsoon season arrived just in time to kill the event. In the short time available it was an impossible task to kit out all the Irish championship riders in appropriately coloured team jetskis. Not to worry though as round five of the series has been rescheduled to run at the prestigious Fairyhouse venue on July 11.

The Carrick and District Motorcycle Club's summer grasstrack series also succumbed to the extreme weather conditions. With some five hours of rain on their popular race track the promoters had no alternative but to call off round one of the series which has always been well supported by riders and spectators alike.

Tandragee Moto Park was the venue for the North Armagh-promoted round of the Ulster championships where the spectacular jump-filled circuit was immaculately prepared by the Sinton family and club workers. As the gate dropped for the Premier class to resume their battle royal it was defending champion Wayne Garrett who lead out of the tight left-hand hairpin which so often leaves a tangled web of man and machine

as adrenaline-filled riders fall foul of both early and late braking syndrome.

One such victim in race one was title challenger Stuart Edmonds. The young TM rider picked himself up off the ground and restarted in last position and what followed was nothing less than an inspirational display of 'big heart' riding. Stuart was rewarded with a fine fourth place for his hard-charging efforts. Hammering home the point by winning the second moto of the day, he served warning to Garrett that this war is far from over! But early season sensation Ricky Bird had a day he would rather forget as mechanical issues diminished his points potential and 13th overall on the day was not on the talented Watt Motorcycles/GOMX-supported racer's wish list.

For sure, the game is hotting up and the main protagonists are aware that one slip, DNF or mechanical gremlin will see them drop off the leaderboard. Only 40 points separate the top five which currently reads Garrett on 138 points, Edmonds on 114, Bird and Gary Gibson tied on 104 and Tommy Merton on 98.

British U21 series leader Graeme Irwin's on a high at the moment and while he's still looking for that elusive moto win in the series it's clear that this youngster is fast maturing into a 'thinking' racer. With five second places to his credit he's well positioned to take the battle to his competition as the series moves into the summer months.

Martin Barr had a great run out at the recent ACU British MMX championship event. The Relentless Suzuki pilot really looked at home in race one as he chased Kristian Whately and the lightning fast Brad Anderson to take third in the

first moto at Frome. Barty then backed up his third with a well-earned seventh in race two having fought through from outside the top 25. Wayne Garrett also added to his championship points tally, scoring 16-14 results on his TSR KTM while Natalie Kane dominated the ladies' class at the same venue with a 1-1, showing yet again that she needs more competition in the UK if she's going to make the top spot at GP level.

Natalie's proving herself to be one of the fastest lady dirt bikers on the planet, despite not being 100 per cent healthy at the moment. Round three of the FIM Woman's World Championship in Spain saw her break into the top five for the first time and 7-5 moto results place the feisty Irish lass in world #6 position.

"If I could get away with the leaders at the start I think I could make a break and stay with them," says Natalie, "but by the time I worked my way up from 11th in the first race the leaders were gone."

It's another big step for the Brit champs leader and you can be sure with the backing of MVR-D Suzuki and her work ethic it will not be long before we see a smile from a GP podium.

Billed as the Super Sunday race series, promoter Harry Corbett has informed Ernie that 'staffing problems' are one of the main reasons why his proposed five-round, £18,000 prize fund race series has yet to run its first event. But the purpose-built race track just outside Dundrod is ready to run and the track is open every Wednesday evening for practice. Riders are advised to phone **07746 988671** before setting off just to make sure it's open.





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Ivan Cervantes will be forced to ply his trade in Mexico

PIG OF A JOB!

THE WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP DOESN'T HAVE TOO MUCH LUCK WHEN TRAVELLING OUTSIDE OF EUROPE – SO WHY THE HELL DOES IT BOTHER?

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

Bloody typical! For the last three weeks I've been waiting for the 'official' announcement from the FIM regarding whether or not the World Enduro Championship will, or won't, be travelling to Mexico this July. Once I had all the hard facts and official comments gathered, so I thought, I'd write an informative and entertaining piece about the pickle the WEC gets itself in seemingly each and every time it heads outside of the EU. This year's GP of Mexico being another perfect example.

As it turns out I've just – and as I write this I do mean just – received an email from the FIM announcing that Mexico is on. Yeah baby, the WEC is going long-haul! At great expense to all involved and following weeks of uncertainty, the WEC will include its 'token' long-haul event after all. An event that, to be perfectly honest, most teams could do without.

The reason why the GP of Mexico was put in jeopardy was because of the much-publicised outbreak of Swine Flu in...you guessed it, Mexico. Killing literally some people, making headlines all around and ensuring that everyone the world over was educated in the proper and correct ways of sneezing, the fact that it coincided with the year in which the WEC was heading to Central America was nothing other than bad luck. But maybe it was a sign, from who I'm not sure, warning the WEC regulars against venturing outside of Europe.

You see the World Enduro Championship doesn't travel well. Never has done. I don't mean that everyone gets travel sick or that all the Italians start longing for 'proper pasta' only hours after leaving home. No. What I mean is that

there is always firstly resistance and secondly disappointment when visiting pastures new outside of Europe.

Outside of Europe the WEC has only ever visited America, both south and north. Most recently it was the States and Canada. Prior to that, at a time when current Enduro 1 world championship leader Mika Ahola was learning his trade on a 125cc TM, it was South America. Brazil I think.

The event in South America was, by all accounts, a disaster. Riders spent about four hours in the saddle each day, completed about three special tests and were joined in competition by a handful of under-prepared locals. Fast forward to a few seasons ago and the 'new look' WEC arrived in New York State before border-hopping to Canada. The events in NYS weren't great – and that's being positive – while the Canadian races were pretty good. The overall thoughts of most were that a lot of money had been spent for not a lot of positive return.

What I'm trying to say is that considering the effort, time and money that goes into getting bikes, riders, mechanics, journalists etc from one continent to another, well, if it's not for something special what's the point?

Now that the economy has turned bad, more than ever before teams are having to watch what they spend which is understandable. What I don't understand is why the FIM insist that the WEC has to include events outside Europe. All the teams and manufacturers involved come from within Europe – the Japanese are only involved because of their Italian importers – so why insist that the series becomes more worldly?

Enduro's competitive home is in Europe and in much the same way that if you want to be involved in the best supercross series you head to the States, if you want to be involved in the best enduro series you head to Europe. I do not doubt that the event in Mexico will be a good one. But Mexico's off-road scene will get more of a boost from the WEC coming to visit than the European-based manufacturers that support the series will by visiting South America.

The world is in recession. Fact. And not more than a couple of months ago the FIM issued a press release stating that in order to be a true world championship from 2011 onwards the WEC must annually travel outside of Europe. At a time when every team is finding it harder and harder to convince sponsors to fund their racing activities the FIM is making it harder for them to compete. Go figure...

In an ideal world the WEC would be a 12-round championship visiting Australia and New Zealand, South America and, hell, why not even Africa as well as numerous races within Europe. But the situation is that it's far from an ideal world at the moment so putting financial hurdles in front of the WEC's teams makes no sense at all. All that happens is a wider gap is driven between the well-funded and not so well-funded teams.

Whether the GP of Mexico will restore the faith of WEC regulars in overseas events is yet to be seen. But I'm confident in saying that most teams would rather not go if they didn't have to. As it stands now they have to go. Fingers crossed the event will be a memorable one – for all the right reasons.

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MORONIC MINORITY!

On the face of it Mallory was a good time for everyone even if the injuries to Shaun Simpson and Billy MacKenzie before the event pretty much drew a line through any serious hope of a home victory. But despite the blue skies a dark spectre lingered in the background in the shape of thieves and idiots.

It's a shame that among the generous and well-meaning people in our sport (and there's no doubt that most bike folk are instinctively helpful, generous to a fault and sociable above and beyond the call of duty) there exists a shadowy group of light-fingered tealeaves who latch onto the crowds that flock to the GP and pick up anything that isn't tied down.

Parts and clothing from trade stands, kit from inside the pits, team pit bikes and quads – the range of goods at risk is frightening. And who knows how many people camping overnight had things go missing – for every theft reported there'll be another that went unnoticed.

Over in the campsite another menace reared its ugly head. Although the camping had been organised into family and general sites the family site was still subject to loud music and some fairly obnoxious behaviour – although the normal lethal pitbikes buzzing around the tents had happily been prevented.

But we still had banging tunes and, at 2.30am, the sound of a car starting and revving up even if they didn't go anywhere. If that's what's thought of as a good time where they came from all well and good – but it showed a remarkable indifference to those around them that included a lot of young children and miserable duffers like me.

Paul, Birmingham

*To be fair Paul it's down to the law of averages – within any large gathering a certain percentage are going to be a*****s and motocross certainly attracts its fair share of them. Sad but true...*

SUTTY'S SUIT!

I've tried online with zero luck to find Sutti's UFO riding gear from last month's CCM article – dunno if it's me or my dire computer me bob skills (the fact this is reaching you in email form and not by carrier pigeon is quite an achievement). Anyway, a helping hand in this matter would be much appreciated!

Barry, Inverness

Sutti's UFO kit is in a big smelly pile on the big lad's bedroom floor although we're sure you can have it if you really want it. Just be prepared to pick the button mushrooms out of it first.

However, if you want something remarkably similar – but not as stinky and without the fungi – your best bet is to point your PC in the direction of mdracingproducts.co.uk

POO-STROKER?

We felt compelled to share some photos of reigning PJMXC and KSMXC SW85 champ Max Hind at the two-stroke only practice day held at Elsworth Motoparc on May 28.

Quick thinking Max came up with a genius solution after mean old dad recently sold the family motorhome. Not one for getting caught short, Max commandeered granny's old portaloo and can now take care of business in the sunshine while watching MX and reading his favourite magazine.

If you decide to print this the Muc-Off may well come in useful now (I'm sure it has many uses). Max is also hoping this month's star prize is a nice RS complete with a luxury bog!

Philip, via email

All he needs to do now is learn how to take his trousers down and he'll be well away!



TOUGH LOVE

I've just finished my 6th form year at school. Some people would say that's a great thing – well it's not! Now I've finished I have to get a full-time job to save up money for my years to come in university.

Okay, this isn't a big deal but I now have to sell my bike! It's beyond devastating. I've owned the bike for two-and-a-half years and it's a part of my lifestyle. Some people might think I'm over-reacting but honestly, think about it, how would you feel if you had to sell your bike and give up riding and racing for three years? It's safe to say that I'm gutted!

I'll probably be dragged away kicking and screaming when it goes – seeing my KTM in another pair of hands that may or may not look after it! What do you think? Am I making a fuss or would you feel equally devastated if you had to give MX the heave-ho?

Geth, Gwynedd

We share your pain Geth but just think of the bike you'll be able to buy when your degree lands you a highly-paid job – that's as long as you're not studying journalism...

MOOSE HUNT!

First of all, great job with the mag! Do you know of any Moose Racing dealer in the UK that sells the Sahara racewear and where can I get my hands on some Red Bull graphics for my '08 KTM 144?

Gwion, Wales

Have a look at dirtbikestore.com Gwion and see what they've got in the way of Moose kit. As for Red Bull graphics you're clean out of luck we're afraid as they're factory only – any you see on eBay with be unlicensed copies...

WOT NO BRITS!

Where have all the Brits gone? I would like to comment on the state of our riders or lack of riders in the world GPs. In 30 years of following grand prix racing I have never seen things so bad as this season. Yes riders are injured and riders come to the end of their career but where is the new young talent that we have in Britain?

Riders like Scott Elderfield, Alex Snow, Max Anstie, Elliot Banks-Browne, Kristian Whatley to name just a few. And why is Brad Anderson not a regular with the way he is riding at the moment. I understand that GP racing has changed and it's about who can pay to ride these days but how do the Latvians and the Estonians manage it? It used to be that countries sent a replacement to a GP if that country had an injured rider. Does the ACU not have a say in world motocross anymore.

The way it's going at the moment there will be more British track officials at the grands prix than riders. And why are the British teams not recruiting our youngsters – most foreign-based teams have their own nationals riding for them. GP MX needs British riders and everyone in the industry needs to do all they can to keep it like that. It's the pinnacle of this wonderful sport.

Wyn, Lampeter

Where have all the Brits gone Wyn? You're spot on – British participation at world championship level is, apart from home GP wildcards, probably at its lowest level ever. The sad fact is that without a big team – or mega money – behind you it just isn't going to happen. We're not even 100 per cent sure that all that many of our young guns have got the speed to cut it at that level but without the funds we'll never find out...

KNEE BOTHER

Is there anyway in which I can look after the leather knee patches on my trousers? My last pair had a massive hole there so I'm just wondering if there's anything I can do to stop it ripping and wearing away.

Chris, Mid Glamorgan

Wash your trousers on cold, don't stick 'em in the drier and dab some dubbin on 'em!



GOT SOMETHING TO SAY? WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT..

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk
All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address.
Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our star prize – this month a pair of Etnies Rap Vulc Mids.





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Exquisite is perhaps the best word to describe these XTRIG triple clamps as they're the finest, most functional piece of German engineering I think I ever did see. As used by top teams including the factory Kawasaki effort, STR Honda and Eurotek KTM.

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Price: £45
Supplier: frosystems.com
Contact: 01527 850614



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360 RACEWEAR

Fox keep their tradition of producing top-notch racewear alive with the awesome new 360 range that features the very best in design, materials and build. Priced to sell, built to last and styled for winners – check it out at your local Fox store now!

Price: Jersey £34.99 Pants £124.99
Supplier: foxeurope.com
Contact: 0191 487 6100

PROX RACING PARTS

RACING PARTS

I always thought that PROX just produced pistons for dirt bike motors so I was slightly shocked to find out that they manufacture a whole lot more quality innards for engines such as connecting rods, valves, clutch parts and the like. The great news for you is that the full range of PROX parts are now available in the UK courtesy of the good guys – and gals – at RaceFX so check out these reasonably priced and perfectly engineered products today!

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Supplier: racefx.co.uk
Contact: 0845 450 1448





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Budget priced racewear never looked so good, lasted so long or fitted so well as this bargainastic Assault racewear from Shift Racing. With a whole set – that's gloves, jersey and pants – costing less than £85 this cool kit is definitely describable as credit crunch busting and in the current economic climate that has to be considered to be a very good thing!

Price: Jersey £19.99 Pants £49.99

Gloves £14.99

Supplier: shifteurope.com

Contact: 0191 487 6300



XTRIG

PRELOAD ADJUSTER

Adjusting the preload on your dirt scooter's rear spring can be a right royal pain. But thanks to this cunning new product from German engineering gods XTRIG that pain can be easily alleviated with the fitment of this clever ring that takes the sting out of adjusting. Simply pop it on your weapon's rear damper then adjust away to your heart's content with an 8mm t-bar – simples...

Price: Call for details

Supplier: shocktech.co.uk

Contact: 0114 243 4226

BOYESEN ENGINEERING

QUICKSHOT 3

This bolt-on performance accelerator pump cover eliminates bog, improves throttle response and offers hassle free leak jet circuit tuning. Currently available for all Keihin FCR carbureted MX and off-road models this patented third generation QuickShot features an innovative triple effect that not only completely fills the pump chamber with fuel, it eliminates all trapped air from the system and provides an adjustable leak jet circuit for quick hand tuning.

Price: £119.99

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 0870 777 9201



NULON

START YA B*****D INSTANT ENGINE STARTER

Probably best kept well clear of your dirt bike this brand-new product from down under – Nulon's Start Ya B*****D spray – is just the thing to get reluctant to fire engines started. Simply spray some into the air intake of your piece of **** motor from a safe distance, then crank over the engine and wait for your puppy to fire into life...

Price: £4.99

Supplier: startyabastard.com

Contact: 01908 520025

BLACKROCK MX

OFF-ROAD TYRES

Motocross can be an expensive hobby and as the summer months roll in and the tracks turn to hardpack things can get increasingly costly as it's possible to wreck a rear tyre in just one outing. That's where Blackrock MX come in as their off-road tyres are priced to suit the pocket of the average cash strapped racer and are available to fit pretty much every model and type of dirt bike.

We've not had chance to try a pair ourselves yet so can't comment on performance – although we hear on the off-road grapevine that they're pretty darn good – but priced from just a tad over 20 bones per tyre it's not gonna cost you an arm and a leg to find out for yourself!

Price: from £21.99

Supplier: blackrock-tyres.com

Contact: 07592 448322



HARD CASE!

Let's face it, there's never a good time to come up short but if you had to pick the worst possible time then chances are the opening lap of, say, the Portuguese GP while running mid-pack would be high on your list as Jeremy Tarroux (#81) demonstrates...

Sequence by Sarah Guterrez



NEXT IS



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Deep in thought – after a troubled start to the season Billy's got a lot on his mind...

QUESTION

AFTER A STUTTERING START TO THE SEASON WE RECKONED IT WAS ABOUT TIME WE PULLED

BILLY MACKENZIE TO ONE SIDE TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON...

Photos by Suttty

TIME!

Not many MX riders generate as many headlines as Billy MacKenzie. The 25-year-old Scot is by far our quickest rider in the MX1 division and with his factory Honda has by far the quickest bike. But his '09 season has got off to a stuttering start with the defending British champ off the pace at home and abroad.

However, flashes of brilliance such as his second race performance in the GP of Catalunya – after being torpedoed roughly from behind by Tony Cairoli in the opener – have pointed to a return to form. On the eve of the British GP we reckoned the time was right to hook up with Billy and find out exactly what the hell is going on...

DBR: *Tendonitis at the start of the year was hardly the ideal beginning to your third season as a full-factory rider. How is the tendonitis now and how has it affected you?*

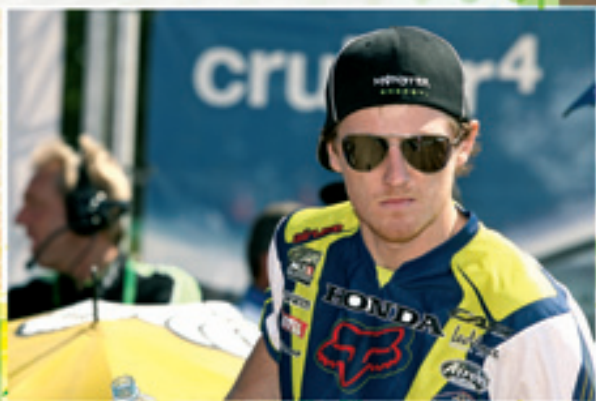
BM: "It was a huge setback for me. I came back from America riding the fastest I ever have with more motivation than ever before too. Everything in my world was going to plan and life was rosy! I had been pounding out so many laps on my bike in America – so many that in the end it just blew up! But I felt so comfortable with it, I could do anything I wanted – I just wanted a little more power here and there.

"We came home just as the massive snow storms hit all over Britain and the weather was terrible. I wasn't too bothered as I was so confident I knew a week or two wouldn't affect what I had done in America. We had some testing to do in Mantova and that's when I felt it come on. I didn't do anything abnormal, I just felt a twinge and didn't think anything else of it. It was only a few weeks later when I started to worry about it because Hawkstone was coming up and it wasn't getting any better, it was getting worse.

"The more training and riding I did the worse it got and in the end I had to just stop everything and rest it. The only way to fix it was an injection or put it in a cast. So I rode with it at Hawkstone, then the Friday before Canada Heights I got the injection."

DBR: *Obviously, so far this year you haven't dominated in the domestic series like you did in 2008. Is this purely just because you've struggled with fitness or do you feel Brad has stepped it up as well?*

BM: "Brad is riding great – there's no taking that away from him – and he is one of my good friends so I like to see him doing well. He has defo stepped it up getting on the new Honda but I know



Cairoli hit Billy so hard in Spain that he's "still got the teeth marks"

Starting the season with tendonitis has meant Billy's been up against it from the get-go



as soon as I get my s*** together I'll be back to where I was.

"It's annoying not being able to do what I did last year because I felt like I was ready before I had all these troubles. And I try not to make excuses but you just have to look at last year – I've trained harder and had more bike time, I should be repeating what I did in 2008 no problem. But I've just had stupid things happening since the start. Langrish I was still riding with my tendonitis – it actually went away and came back before that race – but the second race I showed that my speed is still there. I was just racing for the win that day instead of a championship and made an error.

"But that was another setback too, I bust my

ribs up etc and that was another knock to my confidence. Then I had a big endo while practising and smashed my jewels on the tank – that took a couple of weeks before I could sit on the bike! Basically, I just haven't been able to do any riding at all during the week and that's showing in the races. Now recently I've torn all the ligaments in my thumb! It's just ongoing!"

DBR: *How frustrating do you find not being at the front and fighting for wins?*

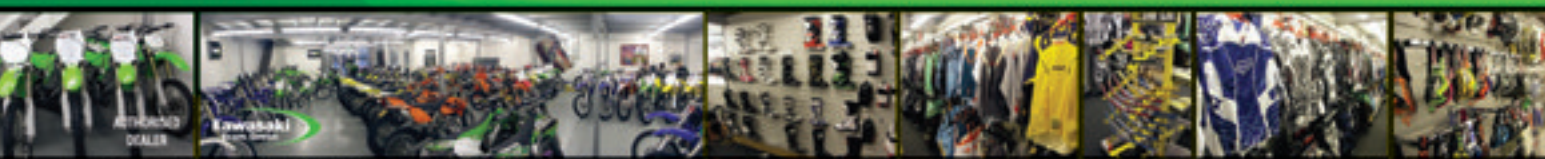
BM: "Hugely! Even more so because recently I have been up there at the GPs, leading these races, pulling away! Knowing I have the speed just to fall back because I get tired or because I'm in pain with my thumb. Man, I really hate

making these excuses but before Bellpuig I had four local anesthetic injections in my thumb – that's pretty serious! And Valkenswaard was the first time I'd done a 40-minute moto!"

DBR: *How good did it feel to lead for so long in Spain? And when Cairoli and Philippaerts went past when you went wide was that down to the pressure of knowing how important a good result was?*

BM: "It felt awesome, it just reminds me that I have got the speed and everything. There are times I start doubting myself but then to go lead like I did – especially with an injury – makes me feel good and look forward to getting healthy again.

>>



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**After a race two fifth in Spain
– and an identical result at
Mallory – Billy's season may
well have turned the corner**



"As for letting them past, yes – but also because I was making some big mistakes trying to hold on with my thumb and I'd learnt my lesson from Langrish! I'm the only factory Honda rider left in the GPs so it was better to start storing some points rather than crash out which we all know happens too often!"

DBR: *How much pressure do you feel being a factory rider? The factory and the team – not to mention big Billy – surely must have great expectations and up until Spain you were struggling to deliver?*

BM: "Yeah, I was starting to feel some pressure, especially from Honda – not directly but I knew they were pressuring the team. CAS are great though, Neil [Prince] knows what goes on inside a rider's head so he understood and could see first hand everything I was dealing with.

"I was trying my hardest and looking for every which way to make things good but all these stupid injuries were just preventing any productive work going on. We could go out and ride but it wouldn't be 100 per cent and unless it is then there's just no point at this level. Your training has to be harder than the race and if I can't ride during the week and put the laps in then all I was doing was wasting everyone's time. It was better to get healthy, concentrate on my physical training and wait to ride again."

DBR: *How do you view threads like 'Is Billy Mac Finished' on internet forums?*

BM: "This is actually quite a funny story. My dad called me up and told me Tyler Bowers had been talking s**t about me so I got on my high horse, contacted Racer X and told them the real story. A few days later I had a Facebook message from Tyler saying sorry and how he didn't say that etc etc. I wouldn't have even looked online if my dad hadn't told me..."

"So then up pops this other thread, same thing – I hadn't even looked online but I get a call from my dad, this time his attitude had changed and he told me not to get involved! I wouldn't have anyway because I'm over it all, ALL of it. I've been having such a bad year that everyone is just on my case again – it's a whole lot different from last year, that's for sure!

"But I've seen it happening and I've just got this 'who cares?' attitude. No-one knows what's really going on, they just look at the results or make their own stories up and I'm just so over it! There was actually a time when I did care about these things, about what people were saying. But these days I just really don't! No interest whatsoever! These people don't know me, they don't call me up and ask what's happening. The only people that matter to me are the people who are there in the good times and bad. That thread got to something ridiculous like 25 pages I was told and I didn't click on it once! Even then I proved to myself how much I DONT CARE! Ha ha."

DBR: *How confident are you that you can build on your performance in Spain?*

BM: "Pretty confident. I'm just looking forward to getting two races done to the ability I know I can. And I'm sure that will be enough for some podiums or race wins!"

DBR: *Are you angry with Cairoli for taking you out in Spain? You did go in pretty hard on him earlier on so do you see it as tit-for-tat or is there something to settle?*

BM: "Well that's what I thought but looking back

on the video I had the inside line so it was up to him to back down – I didn't put it in hard, I had the wheel in front, it was my line, he just thinks everyone should move over for him. And when he took me out it was clearly a take-out – he hit me from behind. I've still got the teeth marks on my arm from when he latched on to me!

"He knew he was wrong though and he Facebooked me too to say sorry but he needs to know if he is gonna race like that then he needs to expect it back and I told him!

"Here's the convo..."

Tony: "Hey Billy...I just saw our crash and I wanna let you know that the space was not enough for try to pass you...so I'm sorry again but I think you already let it feel me in the second heat with your breaking move ;-)... Where did you cut the track the second heat, the first ten minutes you where gone!! I hope we can have another more fun races together. Tony"

Me: "Tony, of course there was not enough space! You're crazy to think there was and I am disappointed that you would lie to me and say you thought it was possible for a pass, you went into the corner with one plan and that was to knock me down. Maybe because I pass you on the first lap, you didn't like that? I know the only reason you are saying sorry is because you know you are p***ing so many people off with your stupid moves, I am already riding with injury and I don't need people making things worse for my race.

"The brake check move was not enough and you know this. If you want to ride hard then you have to be prepared to get it back, like Ken will! But I will not let what happens on the track change my opinion of you as a person, I think you're a cool guy. So what happens on the track stays on the track. Then after maybe we can race clean again!"

DBR: *Finally, how does it feel to have cousin Bry on the team?*

BM: "Ah, it's cool I guess – I'm just glad he has finally got the chance he deserves, he works hard at it. Will be cool to ride and train together again."





HOME IMPROVEMENT!

WITH THE BACKING OF A SUPPORTIVE HOME CROWD IN CARLISLE
DOUGIE LAMPKIN SCORES HIS FIRST PODIUM FINISH IN THE WTC
IN ALMOST TWO YEARS...

Words and photos by Sully

The Dirtbike-Traxs team are better known as hardcore hare and hounds event promoters so when it was announced earlier this year that they'd teamed up with former factory Sherco rider Graham Jarvis to run their first ever trial – two rounds of the world championship no less – in a hilltop quarry in Cumbria many a trials enthusiast wondered if it was possible for them to pull it off?

The answer's a resounding yes and the end result is a very tough but well laid-out event, held in beautiful surroundings that make it possible for everyone to see all the action without hiking around a fellside all day long. In fact, the only things missing at Nord Vue is a knowledgeable commentator armed with a decent sound system and of course a double win for Dougie Lampkin MBE.

While it's impossible for the world's best ever trials rider to notch up WTC wins number 100 and 101 he does score a popular first day podium finishing a solid third on the factory Beta behind the

Spanish pairing of Toni Bou and Adam Raga who go 1-2 on both days. Dougie's second day is by no means disastrous but a difficult opening lap sees him drop far too many fives and not even an outstanding second tour can help the 33-year-old 12-time world champ claw back any higher than fifth.

"The start to the second day was an absolute disaster," says Dougie. "I never hit anything hard enough and each time it ended in a five. Thankfully I managed to turn things around with some much better riding. It's been a good weekend though especially in terms of the championship and I really want to thank the crowd as they have been right behind me throughout the entire weekend."

There is a British winner over the weekend though as Alexz Wigg goes double tops in the Junior championship class on his Beta to take an 11-point lead in the series standings. In the Youth division Sherco's Jonathan Richardson runs 3-2 to extend his series lead to a healthy 27 points!

JAMES DABILL: Under the watchful eye of team manager John Shirt Jnr, former junior world champion James Dabill scores his best ever result in the WTC with a formidable fourth place in the opening day's competition after momentarily sharing the lead with Boney Toe after the first five sections. Slipping back to sixth on day two, the Leeds-based rider also holds sixth in the series standings currently sandwiched between Lampkin in fifth and Fujigas who slips to seventh courtesy of his day one DNF!



THE OBSERVERS: British observers are the best in the business and when you've got characters like this deer stalker hat wearing Sherlock Holmes wannabe on the case then it's no real surprise – in fact, it's elementary.

JERONI FAJARDO: Despite concentrating hard, Dougie's team-mate at Beta has his worst weekend of the series so far this year finishing seventh on both days at Nord Vue.



ADAM RAGA: Since winning the opening round of the WTC series in Northern Ireland Adam Raga's been unable to revisit the top step of the podium. Another pair of second places in Carlisle confirm the cocky Catalan's standing in the series and despite his and the Gas Gas factory's best efforts it appears as though the #2 spot is gonna be his a lot.



TAKAHISA FUJINAMI: If you've not logged on to dirtbikerider.com and seen the footage of 'Fujigas' horrific crash on this very same section during Saturday's competition then shame on you! And shame on the observers too who marked this final lap effort from the Japanese rider on Sunday for a one...



ALBERT CABESTANY: A world indoor champion back in 2002, the synthetic man-made style of sections found at Carlisle really suit Cabestany down to the ground and the Spaniard runs 5-3 over the weekend on his factory four-stroke Sherco.



TONI BOU: The reigning world champion proves he's still a step ahead of the pack by dominating. Suffering with some technical difficulties on day two Bou gets off to a shaky start but the Montesa factory star keeps a cool head and shows some real class as he battles back to keep his win streak alive.

Jonathan Barragan takes victory at home in Spain



Defending MX1 champ David Philippaerts gets mugged in Portugal by Tony Cairoli



In his final race for NGS Honda Marvin Musquin scrubs his way to the MX2 series lead

IBERIAN TIGERS!

Photos by Sarah Gutierrez

IN THE RUN UP TO MALLORY IT'S T-BONE TONY CAIROLI AND MARVELLOUS MARVIN MUSQUIN WHO LEAD THE PACK OUT OF PORTUGAL AND SPAIN...

Before heading into round seven of the series at Mallory Park the FIM motocross world championship title contenders first tour to Portugal and Spain for rounds five and six. It's not uncommon for the Iberian rounds of the MXGP series to be battered by stormy weather although this year both races are held under sunny skies and so the only battering is done out on the track as Marv Attacks his way into the points lead of the MX2 class and Tony T-bones himself to an even bigger lead in the 450cc division.

Cairolì goes double tops in Agueda while Belgium's Ken De Dycker and Clement Desalle finish second and third both times to round out the podium. But the bigger story is the way in which Cairolì claws his way to the front in moto two as he creates chaos and sends reigning MX1 world champion David Philippaerts to hospital as a result of his wild riding!

The clash between the Italian giants actually isn't quite as sinister as it sounds and it's more just a case of the pair banging bars after Cairolì misses his rut going into a left-hander. But the end result is that DP breaks a finger and notches up his first no-score of the year and slips from what would have been third in the standings to sixth...

While what was witnessed in Portugal was worrying enough the carnage Cairolì causes in Catalunya is crazy! The two-time 250F title-holder takes a bit of a battering on lap one in Bellpuig as both Billy MacKenzie and David Philippaerts push past aggressively but there's absolutely no need for the series leader to mow down the Scotsman from behind on the second tour of the 21-lap race causing both men to crash and allowing Barragan to escape to his third moto win of the season.

The Spaniard finishes ahead of Desalle, DP19 and Josh Coppins who also has a run in with Cairolì in the closing laps and is lucky to escape without ending up in a heap as well. Cairolì picks himself up from that skirmish to finish eighth while MacKenzie rebounds to 11th.

Tony redeems himself in the second moto with a classic Cairolì comeback that sees him snatch victory from under the nose of Max Nagl who leads from turn one until the very last lap when Tony throttles through and into an unassailable lead. Philippaerts finishes a distant third while Barragan takes fourth and the overall GP win.

Since James Noble quit the GP scene after the Dutch GP the only other Brits in MX1 – after MacKenzie

– are the CCM teamsters Tom Church and Jason Dougan. TC manages to score three times from four on his CMX450 while Doogs has a tougher time of it and only adds six points to his tally.

In MX2 Marvin Musquin starts the month with a come from behind win in Portugal heading local hero Rui Goncalves across the line in the opening race of the day. But the Portugeezer won't be headed in race two and with a 2-1 scorecard takes the overall win – his second in as many rounds – ahead of Frenchman Steven Frossard on the CLS Kawasaki. Musquin ends the day third overall but more importantly eats into the lead of fellow Frenchie Gautier Paulin who has a disappointing 4-8 outing but still holds a slender six-point lead over his slimline compatriot.

The Portuguese Grand Prix also marks the maiden world championship outing of young German star Ken Roczen who steers his Teka Suzuki to an impressive seventh overall after running 9-4 in the two points-paying motos – an impressive debut for the rookie wunderkind but nowhere near as impressive as he'll be the following weekend in Spain.

While Belgian KTM star Jeremy van Horebeek secures his first ever GP win with a last lap pass on Nico Aubin in España, the freshly turned 15-year-old German is doing the unthinkable and battling for the moto win. Roczen leads briefly but ends up finishing two seconds short of moto winner Anthony Boissiere at the finish after almost 40 minutes of flat-out action! Goncalves joins overall winner van Horebeek on the podium along with third placed rider Boissiere who makes it a KTM clean sweep – but what of French title hopefuls Musquin and Paulin?

It's a disappointing weekend for both riders although Marvin's still smiling as he turns a six-point deficit into a three-point lead as his disappointing 14-9 outscored Gautier's even more disastrous pair of 16ths by nine. It's getting increasingly tight at the top though as Guarnieri's still in the hunt – just five points behind Musquin – and Goncalves is consistently outscoring the lot.

You have to look way down the series standings to find the first placed Brit in MX2 and that's Stephen Sword who currently sits in 17th place, three positions and 19 points ahead of his Red Bull KTM UK team-mate Jake Nicholls who has a good run in Portugal and Spain scoring in every moto!

Mel Pocock's yet to score on the UTAG Yamaha but is still staying positive and battling hard. Overall it's not a good month for Steve Dixon's squad which loses team-leader Zach Osborne after he injures his wrist in Portugal and misses both GPs – the good news is he'll be back for Mallory...





BATTLE OF BRITAIN!

THE FASTEST MX PILOTS ON THE PLANET GO BAR-TO-BAR AT THE BRITISH GP...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Suttu

Red Bull KTM's Max Nagl
chases eventual overall
winner David Philippaerts





Blazing hot sun, bar-banging racing, ladies in bikinis – ah yes, given these conditions there are few things in life finer than the British Grand Prix. In fact, the only things missing from Mallory Park are a few Brits rubbing plastic at the front but it's not for the lack of trying as Billy Mac, Swordy and Ando all take their turn in thrilling the thousands of race fans who attend.

Even without pre-season MX2 favourite Shaun Simpson who's still a few months off getting back on his factory Red Bull KTM, hopes

are high that a Brit will do the business on home turf. But patriotic fervour needs to be tempered with controlled reality and the facts are that Billy MacKenzie's got a fudged thumb and Stephen Sword's strangely out-of-sorts – and the two Scots are our only genuine punt at a podium position.

Of course, there's the likes of Jake Nicholls, UTAG Yamaha's US import Zach Osborne, CCM Racing's Tom Church and Jason Dougan plus MX1 wildcards Brad Anderson and Carl Nunn. But Nicholls, TC and Doogs would all be happy with a top 10 result, Osborne's racing with a

busted wrist and Nunny and Ando are both unproven on the world stage this season with just one GP appearance between them.

Still, it's not all about the Brits and up in MX1 there's a brilliant battle brewing between 'T-Bone' Tony Cairoli and just about everyone else capable of taking a moto win. Over the course of the last couple of GPs the spectacular Italian has cannoned defending champ David Philippaerts off the track, done Billy Mac doggie style and come off worse after clipping Coppins. But despite his regular drams of whisky throttle Tony's still got a healthy lead over Jonathan

A FAN'S EYE VIEW

LOUIS WITH HIS MUMMY
VICKY FROM WORTHING

"Louis is a big Neville Bradshaw fan and will be keeping his fingers crossed for him!"



Steven Frossard opts to scrub as Rui Goncalves and Loic Larrieu go for the good old-fashioned double



© JP O'Connell



STEPHEN SWORD >>

Red Bull KTM UK MX2 13-6

"It's been a tough weekend. Yesterday wasn't good for the qualifying but I was determined to get some sort of result today, now I need to start doing well and getting some good results for the team and make it happen. I'm just not getting used to the bike, not gelling with it. I'd like to feel my old self again but it's a turning point.

"First race wasn't so good – I didn't get into a good rhythm and rode bad. I wasn't happy with that. Second one I had a good start and dug down deep and the fitness was all right, I just made a small bobble and then lost my rhythm for a couple of laps and then come back strong at the end to sixth so I'm pleased and hoping to continue that next week."

Barragan and Ken De Dycker but there's only so many times he's going to get away with kamikaze collisions – could Mallory see his divine wind blow itself out?

And down in MX2 there's the French menage a trois of Marvin Musquin, Steven Frossard and Gautier Paulin, Portugal's Red Bull KTM rider Rui Goncalves, Italy's Davide Guarneri and German 15-year-old sensation Ken Roczen. Factor in series leader Musquin's mid-week switch to become team-mate to Goncalves, a handful of other furiously throttle-happy 250F pilots plus Mickael Pichon's return to GP >>

*MX2 series leader
Marvin Musquin goes
1-1 on his Red Bull
KTM debut*

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action in MX1 and even without a Brit at the sharp end all the ingredients are there for a classic weekend of racing.

There's no great drama in Saturday's MX2 qualifying race but it all kicks off in MX1 when, just one paragraph after we pose a question about Cairoli's luck running out, er, Cairoli's luck runs out. Mystic Meg eat your heart out! Under close inspection he only has himself to blame – check out our Weekend Wrap from Mallory at www.dirtbikerider.com for conclusive video proof – as he slams into Billy Mac in the first turn and goes down like a sack of Sicilian shiznit. Billy almost goes arse over tit too but manages to save it but for T-Bone the race is over and he's doomed to start the points-paying motos with last choice of gate pick.

Having given himself just days to adapt to the KTM after jumping ship from the NGS Honda team, certain pit pundits reckon Musquin could find himself on the wrong end of a shoeing. But Marv Attacks from the drop of the gate and leads every lap on his way to a winning debut for the Red Bull boys. If you can't beat 'em, buy 'em – eh?

Early season pace-setter Paulin's right behind him but a crash at two-thirds distance lets Frossard through to make it a French un-deux-trois and Guarneri and Manuel Monni make it an Italian quattro-cinque ahead of Anthony Boissiere. Goncalves, who with a 1-1-2 tally from the past three GPs was moving into contention, finishes in seventh chased by Jeremy van Horebeek, Ken Roczen and Xavier Boog.

After running as high up as sixth early on, Swordy slips back to 13th at the flag, two places above his Red Bull KTM UK team-mate Nicholls. DB Racing Honda's Neville Bradshaw grabs a couple of points in 19th but for Osborne the race – and the GP – is a done deal within a lap as his broken wrist is just too painful for him to continue.

Race two sees Goncalves at the front from Frossard until half-distance when Musquin carves his way through to take a lead he never relinquishes. Goncalves hangs on for second from the Frenchman but to go from the team's #1 rider to its #2 – especially to a fresh purchase – must smart. It can hardly demonstrate to him that KTM have faith he can do the business...

Paulin comes home fourth from Van Horebeek and Swordy shows flashes of his old self to recover to sixth after a small crash while fourth costs him valuable places and his rhythm. Boog, Roczen, Monni and Guarneri round out the top 10 and The Reverend Jake Nicholls picks up another four points with 17th.

Red Bull KTM's Max Nagl grabs the lead on the opening lap of the first MX1 moto and leads for 14 laps chased by Philippaerts >>



A FAN'S EYE VIEW

THE SHEFFIELD MASSIVE

"Well you wouldn't want a warm beer would you?"

CARL NUNN >>

MVR-D Suzuki MX1 14-10

"I went into Mallory with nothing to prove really and just wanted to enjoy the experience. Race one was good but I knew I could go better and did so in the second race. The RM-Z450 was running perfectly and I was able to maintain my strong pace to the flag to take 10th in the race and 11th overall."



Fast-starting Loic Larrieu
fades in the summer heat



The British GP gets
the official seal of
approval from Dougie
and Alfie Lampkin



BILLY MACKENZIE >>

CAS Honda MX1 DNF-5

"My thumb's fine at the moment. Before the first race I had the injection but the doctor didn't put enough in and he only done the skin, not in the joint, so at the start of the first race I could feel it. Before I went down the race was already over for me – I couldn't hold on. I was annoyed with myself and upset and when I came in I really started thinking 'shall I get surgery' because it needs operating on – the ligament's detached.

"We went and talked to the doctor again and said we needed it deeper in the joint so before the second race he put a lot more local anaesthetic in and he put it deep into the joint – I was almost sick – and it worked for the race y'know, it's still numb now and I managed to get a result that time.

"The second race because I hadn't completed the first race I was still a bit tight, I didn't really know what lines to take and I got arm-pump which is when I started dropping back. I'm sure when this heals up or it's not hurting anymore I'll be up there."

Clement Desalle ends the day on the podium – good work Mr MX Panda!



Shaun Simpson signs autographs on the DBR stand

and MX Panda Clement Desalle. But while the leading three, challenged by first Pichon and then Barragan, are tearing it up at the head of the pack the home supporters are going wild for Brad Anderson.

With elbows down and his PAR Homes Honda pinned WFO Brad sticks a move on Josh Coppins on the second lap to move up to sixth. Then at half-distance the British championship leader powers past a fading Pichon into fifth, his progress around the track soundtracked by a Mexican wave of airhorns. But a fall allows Pichon and Coppins back through and with his rhythm shot to hell he slips back to 12th at the flag.

Brad's still the best Brit – two places ahead of MVR-D Suzuki's Carl Nunn – after Billy Mac pulls out while ninth when the pain from his thumb makes it impossible for him to hang on. Doogs gets in the points with 15th at the flag and Bryan MacKenzie, taking the injured Melotte's ride on his cousin's CAS Honda team, snags a couple with 19th.

But with one race down it's Philippaerts on top followed by Desalle and Barragan. After leading for so long Nagl slides to fourth from Coppins, De Dycker and Pichon who crosses the line ahead of Tanel Leok and Gregory Aranda. Series leader Cairoli, after getting last choice of gate, can only fight his way up to 10th on a track many feel is too one-lined.

Nagl makes up for his race one disappointment by leading every lap on his way to a comfortable victory in the second moto. But Philippaerts is equally selfish with second to ensure his first GP overall since Loket last year and – more importantly – claw back valuable points on Cairoli as he moves up to second in the championship.

Desalle claims third for third overall with Coppins fourth. And Billy Mac – with no feeling in his thumb after some seriously hardcore pre-race pain-killing injections – brings the factory Honda home fifth having run as high as third. Skills Billiam!

Leok, Pichon, Cairoli, Aranda and Nunny round out the top 10 as Anderson takes another 12th and Jordan Rose gets 18th but TC and Bry Mac both narrowly miss out on the points.



BRAD ANDERSON >>

PAR Homes Honda MX1 12-12

"The first race I was real pleased with my speed – I passed Coppins and Pichon and I was on it. Just a bit unlucky I come off and then a few got past me and I lost my rhythm and made another mistake so I ended up 12th. I'm real disappointed with that because I thought I was going to be in the top four. The fans were

real good and they pushed me on.

"In the second one I got a bad start but pushed through and went to pass Nunny in ninth and I slipped out again. I was trying to catch him back up and slipped out again just as I was battling with Cairoli so I got 12th which isn't too bad but I could have easy had two top 10s."



© JP O'Connell

A FAN'S EYE VIEW

FORMER WORLD CHAMPION NEIL HUDSON'S DAUGHTERS ESTHER AND ELIZABETH FROM BRISTOL

"This track's amazing, the jumps are awesome. It's a bit different from when dad rode but we really like it."



It's not a good day for an injured Ken De Dycker

ANTONIO CAIROLI >>

Yamaha Red Bull De Carli MX1 10-8

"I am very happy actually because after the crash yesterday I was thinking it was not possible to race so eighth and 10th is good. Barragan and De Dycker did not do so well so that was also a positive thing. I was still sore after Spain and then on Saturday things got

worse so I hope to be okay for France. I did not like the track here. It was too difficult to overtake and in many places almost one line. It took a lot of time for me to close the gap to the guys in front. Still, there was another Yamaha win thanks to David and that is good."



DAVID PHILIPPAERTS >>

Yamaha Monster Energy MX1 1-2

"For me this is a great day after some difficult GPs. It feels like a long time – too long – since I last won at Locket last year. I almost forgot the feeling! The track was softer here last year and it was definitely easier on Saturday than it was today. I had some good starts but this has happened quite often this season and I owe a big thanks to the team for this – for sure to start at the front makes the job easier."



© JP O'Connell

A FAN'S EYE VIEW

DUNCAN FREEMAN, LUKE FREEMAN AND DAVE PREECE FROM WORCESTERSHIRE.

"We like to be optimistic so we're predicting a Brit win, in fact let's have a British 1-2-3!"



JAKE NICHOLLS >>

Red Bull KTM UK MX2 15-17

"I had a tough day yesterday but came strong in the end so I had 20th gate pick which wasn't so bad. Today I had two average starts – inside the top 20 which is all right for me because my starts aren't the best – and two strong rides.

"The first race I dropped back and then came forward and ended up 15th. I wasn't that happy with the way I rode. In the second race I just wanted to go faster at the start and I did but there were a couple of jams with people going down and stuff so I ended up going backwards to about 19th but I came forward at

the end. I was faster for the last six laps than the three people in front and I was on them the whole time but you just can't pass on this track. It's fun to ride but not good for racing. I was pretty much playing follow the leader and because of how much they watered it I used all my tear-offs halfway through so I was scrubbing my goggles and looking through mud.

"But I was happy with the way I rode in the second race, the crowd were good and I had a good bunch of friends here getting me going. It's just a shame I couldn't have had a little bit better results."



Zach Osborne's one-off yellow UTAG Yamaha doesn't see much action after the American's broken wrist proves too painful

BRYAN MACKENZIE >>

CAS Honda MX1 19-22

"I got a bad start and was right at the back of the pack so I got my head down to try to work my way through. I was behind a group of slower riders but once I got past them all I felt like I'd been holding my breath the whole time. By the time I got a bit of clear track I could ride how I want, rather than switching lines to make passes, arm-pump began to set in and I finished in 19th.

"In the second race I had a monstrous crash on the first lap and got run over so I ended up right at the back. My bars were quite bent so I just did what I could and my aim was to get back in the points. As much as I'm disappointed I'm glad I got away with that big crash, the bike is working really well and although 19th and 21st isn't great it's a start for us."



RESULTS

MX1 >>

1	David Philippaerts	Yamaha Monster Energy	25+22=47
2	Max Nagl	Red Bull KTM	18+25=43
3	Clement Desalle	LS Honda	22+20=42
4	Josh Coppins	Yamaha Monster Energy	16+18=34
5	Tanel Leok	Yamaha Red Bull De Carli	13+15=28
6	Mickael Pichon	Martin Honda	14+14=28
7	Ken De Dycker	Teka Suzuki	15+10=25
8	Antonio Cairoli	Yamaha Red Bull De Carli	11+13=24
9	Gregory Arunda	CLS Kawasaki	12+12=24
10	Jon Barragan	Silver Action KTM	20+0=20
11	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	7+11=18
12	Brad Anderson	PAR Homes Honda	9+9=18
13	Billy MacKenzie	CAS Honda	0+16=16
19	Jason Dougan	Phoenix Tools CCM Racing	6+0=6
22	Jordan Rose	STR Honda	0+3=3
24	Bryan MacKenzie	CAS Honda	2+0=2

MX2 >>

1	Marvin Musquin	Red Bull KTM	25+25=50
2	Steven Frossard	CLS Kawasaki	22+20=42
3	Gautier Paulin	Bud Racing Kawasaki	20+18=38
4	Rui Goncalves	Red Bull KTM	14+22=36
5	Jeremy van Horebeek	KTM Junior Team	13+16=29
6	Davide Guarneri	Yamaha Ricci Racing	18+11=29
7	Manuel Monni	3C Yamaha	16+12=28
8	Xavier Boog	Teka Suzuki	11+14=25
9	Ken Roczen	Teka Suzuki	12+13=25
10	Anthony Boissiere	HDI KTM	15+10=25
11	Stephen Sword	Red Bull KTM UK	8+15=23
15	Jake Nicholls	Red Bull KTM UK	6+4=10
24	Neville Bradshaw	DB Racing Honda	2+0=2

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1 Cairoli 255 points, 2 Philippaerts 221, 3 Barragan 215, 4 Coppins 209, 5 De Dycker 208, 6 Desalle 204, 7 Nagl 198, 8 Leok 190, 9 Swanepoel 106, 10 Vuillemin 101...
13 Billy MacKenzie 84...18 Noble 39...21 Church 32...
23 Dougan 29...26 Anderson 24...28 Nunn 18...39 Rose 3...
41 Bryan MacKenzie 2

MX2 >>

1 Musquin 234 points, 2 Paulin 219, 3 Guarneri 208, 4 Goncalves 202, 5 Frossard 178, 6 Boog 166, 7 Aubin 136, 8 Van Horebeek 118, 9 Monni 115, 10 Osborne 100, 11 Simpson 97...15 Sword 84...21 Nicholls 52...
25 Karro 32...42 Bradshaw 2



GAUTIER PAULIN >>

Bud Racing Kawasaki MX2 3-4

"I lost a lot of points in Spain due to bad starts and this week I proved that I have the speed and my starts were much better in both motos. I had a small crash in the first moto and got my legs caught under the bike which lost me some time but I still managed to get on the podium.

"We had an all-French podium today and next weekend we will all want to prove something in front of a home crowd but I just want to look at it as just another race. I go to every GP wanting to win and I will do the same next weekend."



For our British GP image gallery and exclusive video footage go to www.dirtbikerider.com

The legend that is Rob Herring makes a return to GP action in the Vets class



Cassie's bum – cheeky girl!

VET POWERED!

IVEN TOPS THE GOLDEN OLDIES...

Defending champ Peter Iven takes a double win at round three of the Veteran World Cup from Mats Nilsson and Christophe Lherlteau but there's a strong British showing to keep the crowd interested.

Old warhorse Greg Hanson is best of the Brits in fourth with a 4-6 card and big Brian Wheeler shows he's still keeping his hand in with sixth thanks to 10-5 finishes, two places ahead of Barry Johnson who nets a pair of ninth places. Twin-shock regular Mark Silvester also gets in on the act in 16th but for many fans the sight of Robbie Herring back on a British GP track is alone worth the price of admission.

Robbie, who in the early '90s was arguably the fastest MX rider in the world, comes out of retirement for the GP and shows that while the fitness may not be all there anymore the silky skills are still strong with a fighting fifth first time out. His second race ends early but not before he posts the third fastest time of the moto.

"Last year I said when I turned 40 I'd do the British Vets GP just as a one-off for a bit of fun and that's what I've done," says Robbie. "I've no intention of trying to do a whole series or anything like that – I couldn't afford the time off."

"I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I didn't enjoy getting chronic arm-pump but I enjoyed the track and I enjoyed the crowd but I didn't enjoy the result – my riding was tight and it was slow and I felt awkward out there but to be at the British GP and to ride in front of my home fans again is pretty special."

So how come he's on a 450 four-popper instead of the five-tonner we were expecting him to turn out on?

"I was going to ride a 500cc two-stroke but it's just the time scale – the bike I was going to ride wouldn't have been ready and was going to take too much to set up. I couldn't just jump on it. The two-strokes are a lot more of a handful whereas the 450 Kawasaki in standard trim I can get on and I can race it straight off."

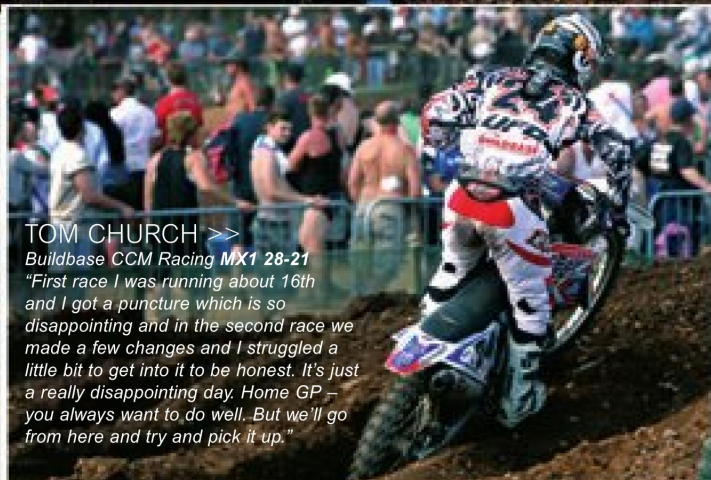
TANEL LEOK >>

Yamaha Red Bull De Carli MX1 8-6

"I had a tough position in the startgate and although I got a good jump for the first moto I ended up being pushed quite wide. It was really difficult to come from 15th to eighth. I was feeling good and my riding was going well but it was hard to pass. I had a better start in the second race but made some mistakes halfway through the moto. The end was okay. Overall I had a bit of bad luck on Saturday and it did not help me today."



Greg Hanson goes fourth



TOM CHURCH >>

Buildbase CCM Racing MX1 28-21

"First race I was running about 16th and I got a puncture which is so disappointing and in the second race we made a few changes and I struggled a little bit to get into it to be honest. It's just a really disappointing day. Home GP – you always want to do well. But we'll go from here and try and pick it up."



© J.P. O'Connor

A FAN'S EYE VIEW

NORTHERN MONKEYS

Giving Ando some British lovin'!

WALL RIDE!

BRICK WALLS AREN'T A COMMON OBSTACLE IN OFF-ROAD RACING BUT UPHILL STEPS AND SHORT SHARP BANKS ARE AND THE TECHNIQUE TO CLIMB THEM ALL IS THE SAME – HERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF ADVICE ON HOW TO GET UP HAZARDS LIKE THESE FROM THE BIG MAN HIMSELF...

Words by David Knight Photos by Sully





David Knight is one of Britain's best ever off-road racers – the burly Manxman already has two world enduro championships and two AMA GNCC titles to his name and he'll probably win a few more before he hangs up his Alpinestars. Each month the massively talented BMW factory rider will run through a technique that's essential for everyone's off-road arsenal – this issue it's how to ride up your garden wall. When you've read and digested this latest lesson log on to dirtbikerider.com for a free video demo...

"Climbing a wall like this one is a similar sort of technique to what I showed you last month with the logs but obviously – unlike a log – the top of this wall is flat and with no drop on the back side. This wall is also a fair

bit higher than the log was as well. Although the extra height makes it look a lot harder to climb the techniques used are very similar so if you've mastered logs already this will be relatively easy.

"Like all obstacles the approach is very important. Have a good look to see if there's an alternative line you can use or a place where the gap from the floor to the top of the wall is less high or perhaps a place where the top is more rounded – anything that might make it easier or quicker to get up is well worth trying.

"When I've picked my line I approach this wall in second gear then I'll pull a wheelie just a few feet before I reach the base of the wall, aiming to just kiss the top of the wall with my front wheel – this is mega important because if you miss with the front wheel

then you'll case the wall with your sump plate or exhaust and it'll stop you dead and that'll be you. If you don't carry the wheel high enough then you'll pretty much stop dead then as well so aim your wheel for the top of the wall so it more or less just travels through it.

"If you get that perfectly right then it's time to move your bodyweight forwards and drive up the wall. Don't close the gas off too early otherwise you'll get in trouble and drop back down but don't keep it on so long that you launch right up out of the top either. Remember to balance out the bike with your bodyweight and you'll be doing okay."

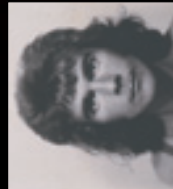
For video footage of Knight's awesome wall riding technique go to www.dirtbikerider.co.uk



KNIGHT SCHOOL

SIM PATERSON HURLES
HIS FACTORY BETA
ACROSS THE ROAD TO
4th IN RACE ONE





COLOUR PIECE!

IT'S BEEN ALMOST 30 YEARS SINCE A FRESH-FACED JACK BURNICLE FIRST ROLLED UP AT A GRAND PRIX MOTOCROSS WITH NOTHING OTHER THAN A FEW ROLLS OF BLACK AND WHITE FILM...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

I flew into Cologne for the penultimate 250 GP of 1979 armed – as usual – with holdall, sleeping bag and camera case. Only this trip, for the first time at a grand prix, I carried colour film!

Most of my early work was done for weekly comics MCN and the fledgling T+MX, whose output was printed in murky shades of grey from my trusty 400 ASA Tri-X negatives. But this time I also chucked in a roll of 200 ASA Kodak colour transparency (or 'slide') film.

From the airport that Friday, August 3rd, I caught a train into the city centre then found a bus that would take me eastwards along the E40, past Overath and Engelskirchen, before turning south towards Bielstein. By the time the bus arrived there rain was lashing down. I trudged through tall fir trees before emerging into a lush, green paddock.

A single small motorhome nestled in the far corner so I squelched my way across the soggy pasture and knocked on the door. It was answered by wild-eyed American Jim Pomeroy, trying momentarily to fathom out who the hell I was. He and his girlfriend, enjoying a cosy game of backgammon, reluctantly invited this dripping Englishman into their spotless camper and returned resolutely to the backgammon board, ignoring their grateful but unwanted guest!

Pomeroy, the first Yank to win an MXGP – at Sabadell in Spain in 1973, had fallen out with Bultaco after persistent problems with their 1979 works special and been hired, for the last two rounds, by Italian manufacturer Beta. The Florentine factory, very serious about developing its 250 'crosser, had even enticed Hakan Carlqvist to Italy in October 1978 for a fortnight of intensive testing. Carla found a good bike and almost signed because Husqvarna were refusing to supply him with a full-time mechanic, despite the Swede finishing seventh in the '78 250 GPs travelling alone with girlfriend Annelie and doing his own spanning!

At the 11th hour Husqvarna relented and a part factory, part dealer sponsorship was agreed with Carla's tobacco-chewing pal at the 'Yellows' shop and Husky delivered a van and calm, capable mechanic Tommy Jansson who had worked four seasons with Torleif Hansen.

This contrasting pair of characters – the bold, ebullient Carlqvist and quiet, introspective Jansson – dominated that 250 series for Husqvarna and had already tied up the championship before arriving at Bielstein where Carlqvist first competed on a Spanish Ossa back in 1974. Behind him, silver and bronze medals lay in the balance between shy, determined Brit Neil Hudson (Maico) and gritty little Russian Vladimir Kavinov (KTM). Fortunately, the weather improved dramatically overnight so when I awoke in

Rob Hooper's Ford Transit on Saturday morning the sun glittered on a baking, broad valley cleaven into the wooded hills of Bergische Land.

Bielstein first hosted a 250 GP in 1963 won by Torsten Hallman (Husqvarna) and had since been, with Beuerne, the mainstay of the West German world round. Legends like Joel Robert, Gaston Rahier and revered home boy Adolf Weil had won here. The wonderful Weil, on a Maico, also claimed Bielstein's first 500 GP in 1971 and Roger De Coster (Suzuki) had triumphed twice in the mid '70s.

The track featured one of the widest start and finish straights I'd ever seen, curling uphill into a steep, sharpening 180 degree left-hander before howling through a dark, long tunnel beneath tall trees. It plunged into its very own 'gravity cavity' before leaping out of the woods across one of several road crossings and veered back across the Tarmac to the head of the valley into a series of banked, hard-pack bends. Then it looped downhill, back up through the woodlands on the far side and exploded out on to the slick, stony main straight. Frighteningly fast, Bielstein quaked with the excitement and anticipation of 30,000 fans, eager to urge on their hero Rolf Dieffenbach (Kawasaki) and universally popular guests Carlqvist and Pomeroy.

Amazingly though, Birmingham's grand prix rookie Vaughan Semmens, on his Doug Wheeler Maico, skated into turn one ahead of Carlqvist before being summarily despatched at full bore through the trees. Italian champion Ivan Alborghetti (KTM) fell in the first turn, forcing Jaak van Velthoven wide. The big Belgian slewed straight on in a dramatic flurry of dirt, stones and a fleeing Burnicle. Life could often be a bit hazardous with only a 135mm lens!

Halfway round the opening lap deposited world champion Gennady Moiseev crashed his KTM, retiring six laps later from a hopeless last, while Semmens stubbornly held off 'Nellie' Hudson until lap four. By the time Hudson had squeezed through Carlqvist was 10 seconds clear, broadsiding into the dusty blue-groove corners in a dazzling display of cavalier exuberance. "I always admired the way

>>

After the race, 250 GP, I saw Hakan Carlqvist (Husqvarna) and Neil Hudson (Maico) and they were both very friendly and helpful.

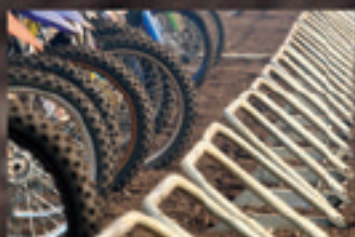


was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX Journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

NAME	TEAM	POSITION
Carlqvist	Husqvarna	1st
Hudson	Maico	2nd
Kavinov	KTM	3rd
Dieffenbach	Kawasaki	4th
Alborghetti	KTM	5th
Velthoven	Maico	6th
Moiseev	KTM	7th
Semmens	Maico	8th
Hooper	Ford	9th
Burnicle	Maico	10th



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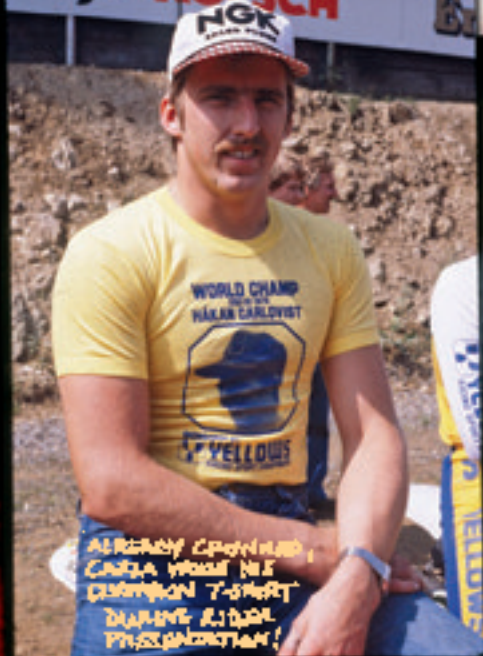
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TORAO SUZUKI (LEFT) WITH
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RACING THE SUPPORT RACES.
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CARLQVIST WROTE HIS
COMMON 7-START
DURING RIDE
PHYSICIANSHIP!

Torleif Hansen forced quickly to the front and opened up a gap before his opponents could respond," said Hakan. "So I've always tried to do the same." He won by over a minute!

The crowd cheered on Pomeroy as he tried everything to force a way past Semmens while fending off energetic French teenager Patrick Boniface (Steven's dad!) on a Honda. Further back, Kavinov fought with Dutchman Kees van der Ven (Maico) and Belgian Jean-Claude Lacquaye (SWM) urged on by team manager Joel Robert but Hooper slid painfully off his Maico across the Tarmac on lap two, fighting spiritedly back from 40th to 14th behind Bultaco-mounted Spaniard Antonio Elias

(father of MotoGP ace Toni).

Van der Ven eventually helped his friend Hudson edge closer to runner-up in the world by overpowering Kavinov but Pomeroy never quite caught Semmens who sensationally secured his first podium finish of the year.

Carla made off with the second moto ahead of a cracking duel between Kavinov and Hudson. The short, stubby Russian looked certain of second until, with a lap to go, he hit a spectator who crossed the track! Brave but shaken, Kavinov remounted and clung dizzily on to fourth place behind van der Ven and fractions of a second in front of aggressive little Japanese tearaway Torao Suzuki on his works Aprilia. That freak incident meant that Nellie had clinched second place in the world championship after winning successive GPs in Italy, Belgium and Yugoslavia on his factory Maico earlier in the year.

Pomeroy could only manage 12th after an awful start and a disappointed Semmens was sadly sidelined on the opening lap when his front forks seized solid. Both Moiseev and Hooper repeated their first race calamities, the Russian retiring immediately while Hooper typically flew through to 17th place, this time capturing Elias en route. It had been a truly breathtaking day's racing and we duly celebrated that night.

The following morning I stood, hungover, at a bus stop back in the city centre, bang opposite Cologne's colossal cathedral. Overcome with curiosity I abandoned holdall, sleeping bag and camera case in the bus shelter, walked over the road and entered the largest Gothic church in Northern Europe.

Begun in 1248, it took until 1880 to complete and, for the next four years, was the tallest building in the world! I soaked up the thundering silence and wandered around captivated by the

YOUNG MAN SEMMENS
WROTE THE "DUAL"
WHEN HE WROTE TO
THIRD IN RACE ONE



sheer vastness of its soaring, vaulted ceilings. When I eventually wrenched myself away and returned to the real world my bags, miraculously, were still there – and I was in time to catch the next bus!

Even better, I got home, had my colour film processed (at Joe's Basement in Soho) and, bowed excitedly over the lightbox, found a few decent snaps – some of which have finally hit the printed page, right here, 30 years on!





COOQ SURE!

HE MAY HAVE LOST THE MX2 RED SERIES LEADER'S PLATE ON THE EVE OF THE BRITISH GP BUT 19-YEAR-OLD FRENCHMAN GAUTIER PAULIN'S CONFIDENT HE'LL BE CARRYING IT AGAIN SOON...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

Gautier Paulin already has a world title in BMX and a European title in motocross and he's held the MX2 red plate for most of 2009. We talked before Mallory to Kawasaki's main male hope for GP glory.

The 19-year-old from Draguignan in the Alpes Maritime – the same district which spawned JMB – has enjoyed a rapid surge to the top in motocross after quitting the BMX scene at the height of his career, racing to the European title at his first attempt in 2007 and streaking to a fourth-placed finish at the Moneyglass GP on a free weekend at the end of the same season. But he's also experienced the other side of the coin with a pretty torrid first full GP season last term.

"I broke two times my hand, one collarbone and one tibia. When I broke my collarbone at St Jean D'Angely my goal was to race again at the Lommel GP but two weeks before Lommel I had a bad crash and I broke my tibia. After that I just thought it was best to take my time and come back stronger. When I started riding again in the winter I was effectively nine months off the bike.

"And another thing I discovered last year was to see who are the good people, the people who are there for you when you are injured. They stay with you, they don't drop you. When I was injured I could see who was with me and who was not looking at me anymore. Some people are only friends in good times. Now I know, I have less people around me this year but the ones I have are good for me!

"Last season was spoilt by injury. It was a hard time but you can't do anything about that. I accepted my injury but it made me determined to come back even stronger and I have done!"



Paulin picked up the red series leader's plate at the opening round and carried it until Spain



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Photographs by Rick Byth

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*Paulin keeps his cool...
"I don't feel pressure. When I
am on the gate I just want to
enjoy my race and take as
many points as possible"*

The big mudder at the first GP in Faenza saw a truly dominant ride from Gautier as he hauled in mid-race leader Jeremy Van Horebeek at 20 seconds a lap, joking post-race that he had probably learnt his mud skills riding in the forests with buddy Antoine Meo, now a top grade enduro rider. And remember too, that first win could have come 12 months earlier as Gautier led at Bellpuig – virtually the only rider still circulating – when the red flag came out and the result was counted one lap back when he was still third.

And the following races have been equally impressive. Two seconds in Bulgaria, a win and a seventh from last in Turkey and 32 points despite two crashes in the Dutch sand. That sort of scoring builds confidence but Gautier is not lacking that anyway.

"Many riders have won motos but I try to do my best every race and am confident. For sure I am stronger physically than Musquin. I am not him so I don't know what he is feeling but what I know is I am still strong at the end of the races and I am continually improving my technique. We also do many tests with my bike and that is also improving every week.

"I don't feel I have any weaknesses in my riding anymore. I feel good on the bike on all sorts of track – in the sand, the mud, on hard tracks. For sure I can be even better but I am satisfied with my season so far. When I go to the start I want to win but I know that is not always possible and I try to take what is the maximum for me on that day. If I holeshot I expect to win but if I crash in the start then I must concentrate

to advance as far as possible. In that circumstance a fourth would be good.

"I try to ride an intelligent race. When I won the first moto in Turkey I was feeling good and won by six seconds but it could have been more. I was just racing to keep Vongsana off my rear wheel – it is 25 points whether you win by one second or one minute. In the second race I made a mistake and at Valkenswaard I crashed two times. That was too much. But I am never riding 100 per cent. I try to do my race without mistake. For sure I push but I try never to ride over the top."

As we spoke on the eve of the Spanish GP, I asked Gautier if he was surprised to be leading so emphatically a third of the way through the series?

"No, not at all, I worked hard to be at the front and that's where I am. I got the red plate straight away and I want to keep it. I want the title. If I crash tomorrow and get a DNF or if the bike has a problem and I lose the red plate, for sure I want to come back next race and win it back. Anything can happen but I want to win."

And 'anything' did happen the next day when he twice found himself at the very back of the pack, the second time half-a-lap down once he'd extracted his bike from underneath Mel Pocock's Yam after wildcard Jose Butron had dragged them down at turn one.

So the red plate was gone for Mallory but no-one was prepared to bet against him getting it back at the gnarly track in the East Midlands.

By now you should have realised that Gautier



is not your everyday throttle-happy kid – he has a head beyond his 19 years and a desire which is the trademark of every potential champion.

"When I switched from BMX I turned pro very quickly. I have always had confidence in my ability and if the results are not coming I just have to work even harder. For sure I always liked the jumps. My technique is good, I get that from BMX. But I like the corners also now. That was my weakness before but I have worked hard this winter in America, learning to ride the ruts.

"I enjoy it every time I ride the bike now on every sort of track. We were all together – me, David [Vuillemin] and Jacky [Vimond]. Jacky shows me every time my mistakes and that helps me to improve. All of these small details are important and that's why I am so strong now. And I don't like to lose. Sometimes that is bad for me but sometimes it is good. Every time I want more and that is how you must be in any sport.

"I don't feel pressure. When I am on the gate I just want to enjoy my race and take as many points as possible. When I won the European championship I lost some points at the start of the series and had to keep winning but I never felt pressure. I can stay cool and it is no different when the situation is reversed, like now when I have had the red plate.

"I have always been like that, even as a small kid. When I went to America for the BMX world championship I was still relaxed. That's me. I don't know why but when you work hard during the week you are confident for the race at the weekend. I just keep focused."

Ironically, Gautier is not leading the

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French championship. Does he have two heads – one for the national series and another for the major goal?

"No, we had three rounds of the French series before the first GP and I was concentrated more on not getting injured. I was probably only riding about 80 per cent at the first round but I was building gradually every week until I won the race at Romagne one week before Faenza.

Now at Plomion on May Day I crashed with Musquin and another rider rode over my bike. The bike was too damaged to continue, otherwise I would be leading. I also want to win the French championship but of course my priority is the world title."

In the French series the MX1 and MX2 boys race together although there are titles in each class. Is that a good or a bad thing?

"Sometimes it is actually better to have a 250 when the track is really fast. And for sure it is a good training for the world championship to ride with guys like Greg Aranda and David Vuillemin. That makes you work hard. When it is sandy or muddy that is not the big difference, it is the layout of the track.

"With a 250 we have a small engine so we can turn faster, sometimes the 450 will push the rider in the turn. In a long corner like in the sand you can be even faster on a 250. For sure when you have a 450 you cannot put full gas everywhere. You have to be more gentle."

So, is Gautier Paulin on his way towards becoming the first man ever to win world titles in BMX and motocross?

"You can never be completely in control.

Remember how Josh was 100 points in front and he got injured. It wasn't his fault, it wasn't even the material, it was just one stone in the rear brake. Anything can happen, you can only do your best and see what happens. I'm just looking to enjoy every moto and do my best. But, like I said before, I don't think about the others. I look only at myself and if I don't win, if I don't have the red plate, I have to see how I can improve my performance so that I do!"

BEST BUDS!

GAUTIER'S DREAM TEAM >>>

It took Gautier a long time to finally sign his new contract last summer.

"The contract I had signed in 2008 was 70 per cent Molson, 30 per cent Kawasaki. Kawasaki took over my contract 100 per cent and I had the choice between CLS and Bud Racing. But CLS was full when they signed Rombaut so it was clear that I would go with Bud Racing.

"It took so long for me to sign because I wanted to have my team around me. I wanted the best material. The team is smaller but that does not matter. I have the things I want – the material, the engine, the suspension. It was all down to details. When everything was sure I signed.

"I could have gone to Yamaha, Suzuki or wherever if I'd wanted but I don't care that we have a small truck because what is inside is better. I have a good French team, so I can speak French with everybody and the results show that it is working properly. And here at Bud the basis of the team is a family – the mechanics are always together and when we have good results the motivation is even higher.

"Motocross is a passion for all of us..."



Paulin chases down Guarneri



Don't let his baby-faced
looks fool you –
Ken Roczen is already
mixing it up with the big
guns of MX2

TEENAGE RAMPAGE!

HE'S ONLY JUST TURNED 15 BUT ALREADY KEN ROCZEN IS
TAKING THE MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BY STORM...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson





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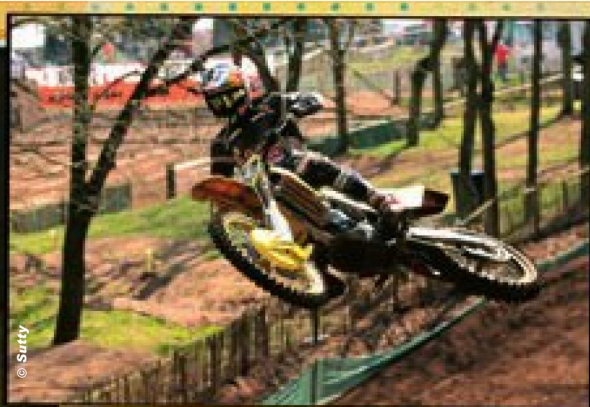


ERIC GEBOERS

THE KID ON KEN >>

"I never saw anyone who had so many aspects of what makes a good rider. He has riding talent, courage, speed, physique, spirit and a polite media presence – put a microphone in front of him and he can carry out an interview in perfect English and all that at 15 years of age."

© bergemarkus.com/Red Bull Photofiles



Every now and again a very special kid arrives on the block and the latest teenager to hit the world for six is German uber talent Ken Roczen.

With a reverential hype normally reserved for US amateurs, the off-road world has been waiting for a couple of years for Ken to reach his 15th birthday and the boy himself has been kicking his heels impatiently for a couple of years. He actually entered for the Mantova Supercross two years back when he was still 12 and was most upset that they wouldn't let him line up on his 250F alongside the GP runners on their 450s!

Not that Kenny is an insufferable brat – quite the opposite in fact. Coming from a solid East German home, his parents Heiko – a metal worker – and Steffi have sacrificed everything to give their son the chance to exploit his extraordinary talents and passed on their hard-working, down-to-earth philosophy too.

World 85cc champ after two titanic struggles with Max Anstie at Sevlievo two summers back, Ken has spent his entire career in the youth ranks upgrading early – "I always ran out of opposition and wasn't going to learn anything so it was better to move up even if I wasn't always winning" – and contested rounds of the ADAC Masters, the German equivalent of the MX1 Maxxis, last year before astounding his peers back in March by beating the likes of Schiffer, Boog and Kojima in the Frankenbach International.

He even got a start at Mantova this year but not at Valence or Hawkstone as FFM and ACU rules still exclude 14-year-olds from adult racing. However, UK fans got their first glimpse of his scintillating speed in the Euro MX2 round one month later.

GP rules also require contestants to be 15 so Ken had to sit out the first four rounds but his presence was already felt at Valkenswaard, three days before his birthday, as he turned up to watch with mum and dad. Teka turned up with their ex-Red Bull hospitality unit too and who is emblazoned on the side? Not Steve, not Keeno but Kenny!

There were of course those around who were simply waiting for him to fall on his face when he finally got to enter the world stage at Agueda and there were some grinning doubters as he went down at turn one in the Saturday qualifier and ended up 26th, his goggles gone but his spirits not down.

"Not to worry," he told me straight after the race. "Just about everything which could happen did so today. I must admit I was nervous – my first day of GP racing – but I've got today behind me. Tomorrow is the race."

And what a race! Down around 30th up the first step-up in the opening moto, he was 18th at the end of the first lap – and ninth at the finish having charged for the entire 40 minutes. "My weekend was already saved," he told me later, "but my dad told me I had the speed to hold a top six if I could get a start. I laughed at first but now I know what he meant."

Sixth on lap one of the second race, Ken had advanced to fourth at the chequered flag and was the only rider in the race still running 1.58 laps. He could have gobbled up Davide Guarneri if >>



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DAVE THORPE

THE KING ON KEN >>

"I had never seen Kenny ride until Portugal but from the very first lap I was amazed at his skills. He has a great future before him."

the race had been two laps longer! Even a 20th place would have made Kenny the youngest GP scorer of all time but 30 points on his GP debut, just 11 days after his 15th birthday? Amazing!

He was not the only one at the Teka truck with tears in his eyes as he was given a deserved ovation but it was quickly into the back of the truck for a debriefing and he knows this is all part of the job.

Team manager Thomas Ramsbacher freely admitted Ken had exceeded all expectations but was quick to spell out the priorities for Bellpuig one week later. "Next week is all about consolidation. Two times in the points will be enough...and staying on two wheels!" The elation was fully deserved but no-one expects a medal-winning performance every week, not in his rookie year anyway.

Qualifying was again not without incident in Spain – a vicious sandwich between Boog and Verbruggen out of the start leaving Ken with gate 19 for Sunday. But seventh in Pre-Qualifying showed he had the speed again and race day delivered the confirmation.

Sixth in the opening moto meant once again the weekend was already a success but what followed topped all that had gone before. Third through turn one second time out, Kenny chased Boissiere onto Goncalves' rear wheel. The Frenchman jumped past the factory Toomer with an outside sweep on a massive tabletop and the winner of the last two GPs started getting jittery under pressure from the 15-year-old.

It would clearly only be a matter of time before Kenny also went through but in the end Rui high-sided through some ripples and the German teenager could start to haul back in Boissiere. "I got past him once but he block passed me straight back. It was hard but fair, I'm not complaining. There was only a lap to go then so I settled for what I'd got."

And 37 points in his second GP, two points off the podium and two seconds from a first moto win ain't too bad, eh? Ken Roczen has truly arrived on the world stage but where exactly has he arrived from?

"A small town called Mattstedt, just outside Apolda. My dad used to race motocross himself and when I was two-and-a-half he sat me on a bike. I just took off and pretty soon was doing things on a bike other kids couldn't do. I had my first race when I was three and my parents soon decided they wanted to give me the chance to progress."

It was five years ago that Suzuki Europe International started to take a particular interest in Ken. "My first bike was a LEM and even when I moved to the 65cc class there was no Suzuki on the market but I had yellow plastics on my bikes. I did actually race KTM for a couple of races when I moved to the 85s because they offered us two bikes but I didn't enjoy it. We only had one bike from Suzuki at first but I felt more at home on it."

And once Suzuki saw what a gem they had on their books they started making plans to keep



him. It is no secret that the Teka MX2 team was set up as a vehicle to bring Kenny into the GPs, their 2008 campaign merely there to learn the ropes while their future star approached his 15th birthday.

Still only 5ft 6ins, Ken has added six inches during the last 18 months but he was already racing a 250F regularly back in 2007 (that world junior win being a one-off ride on an 85) and his current Suzuki contract runs until the end of 2013. Red Bull were also quick to sign up the rising star and the Roczens have not only profited financially from the deal.

"This last winter is the first time that I have trained seriously. I'm still young and I didn't want to start too early. I get a training plan from the Red Bull Training Academy, I follow it to the letter and I can see how it is helping me – I didn't have any physical problems in either Portugal or Spain. And it is good for me to have the professional advice. I can have complete faith in them giving me a plan which is correct for my age – they know what a teenage body can take during this period of growth and I must not do too much."

And Heiko and Steffi are right there behind their son. As we waited to park up at Bellpuig I saw for myself that it was dad who went out for an hour-long run with Ken and mum was waiting to give them both a quick massage if necessary when they got back.

It's natural after the initial successes at GP level that Ken's starting to calculate his world ranking come September if he can keep up his current scoring rate but he knows that he cannot expect 30 points plus every week.

"I haven't set myself any goals for this year, either for the series or each week. I'll just take each race as it comes and take home what I earn. I'll race my hardest every week and hope for the best. I will definitely race the MX2 GPs this year and next, after that there are no fixed plans yet but I must admit it is my goal to race in America."

"I've been over there – I won my class at the Miniolympics in Florida a few years back – and I want to race Nationals when I have a free weekend and I am old enough. I want to race supercross too – US SX is totally cool!"

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With the AMA Nats two rounds in Tommy's still to hit top form – don't bet against it happening soon...



LIVING IN AMERICA!

AFTER TWO ROUNDS OF THE AMA NATIONALS HE AIN'T EXACTLY GETTING DOWN LIKE JAMES BROWN BUT TOMMY SEARLE'S CONFIDENT HE'S GOT WHAT IT TAKES...

At only 19 years of age Tommy Searle has moved thousands of miles from home to chase his dream to win in America, both outdoors and in. Part of a trio of invaders from the GPs, Searle – along with 2008 MX2 champ Tyla Rattray and 2006 MX2 champ Christophe Pourcel – are taking on the Americans in their own backyard.

We talked to Tommy Gun after the Hangtown National, round two of the 2009 Lucas Oil AMA Pro Motocross Championship...

DBR: So what's it been like going from living in England to living in America?

TS: "It was a big change at first when I came over – I had to get a house sorted and stuff like that –

but luckily I was able to stay at my friend's house for a little while to settle in and I wasn't running around in hotels and stuff so that made it easier. Once I got settled in I realised it's not such a big deal. The only thing that's hard is being away from my family. That's the main thing. Everything else you can just get used to."

DBR: Riders in the past have complained that there are a lot of distractions in California – a lot of stuff you can be doing instead of what you should be doing...

TS: "My trainer lives with me so it's not like I can go do all that stuff. I'm on a pretty tight leash to be fair. If he wasn't living with me the whole time maybe it'd be different but I can't be going out

and doing all that if he's watching me the whole time. It won't happen. But we have fun and I get along with him well and I have my buddy staying with me so we all get along well and we have a lot of fun anyway."

DBR: When you first got here I understand you were doing a lot of laps at the KTM supercross test track, is that right?

TS: "Yeah... I didn't do an amazing amount like I was going to race a supercross but I went out there like five or six days just messing around for."

DBR: What did you think about that? The test tracks are designed to be typical of what you would find on an actual AMA SX track...



STATESIDE

Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/XX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and recently became one of

Racer X's editors at large. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene..

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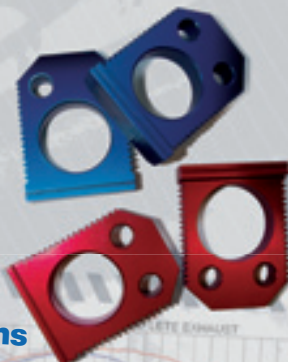
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Tommy gets in the zone before his first AMA National race at Glen Helen

Warming up on his MX rower



TS: "I went out there just after it was rebuilt and we kind of had some rainy days so it was kind of sticky and fresh – it wasn't worn in or anything – so I was looking at it and thinking that I wasn't going to enjoy it. But after like an hour or so of riding I had everything down – I had all the sections down – and I was starting to enjoy it. After a while I found my rhythm and it became fun but at first I was like 'whoa, this is a big deal, it's not as easy as I thought'. But like anything it took time."

DBR: Once you got it sorted out did it help your confidence knowing you can get around the track? Because since you're here you're going to race supercross, there's no way around it.

TS: "Yeah, it did, definitely. It's nice to know that I'm comfortable with it and not be nervous about what's coming next year. I wanted to get it out of the way and not be hitting the track for the first time late this year when everyone is hitting the track for the first time and have them going 'who's this new guy casing everything?' and trying to keep up with the guys and everything."

DBR: You obviously spent a lot of time at Glen Helen coming up to the start of the Nationals so what did you think of the difference between the track on a Thursday practice day and what it was like when you actually got out there for a National?

TS: "It was a different track. You can't even call it the same track to be fair. It's nothing like it. It was still good to go and practice there because it's a tough track to ride so it benefited me to ride there before."

DBR: You struggled a little bit at Hangtown – what went on there?

TS: "My first practice was okay and I posted some good times – I was fourth – so I was kind of happy with that but then the second practice I didn't get the lap that I wanted to. I didn't think the second practice would be faster than the first



and I couldn't see my pitboard with everyone hanging out of there. My mechanic, Preston, put a time on the board but I didn't see it and when I came in he was like 'that session was fastest' and I didn't realise it.

"So I think I went to the line like ninth which wasn't a big deal – I'm pretty good at starts anyway – so I wasn't really worried and I got a good jump and came around the first corner around eighth and then moved into fifth behind [Brett] Metcalfe. But then I made a small crash. I wasn't riding like I should for some reason. I was making mistakes and then I fell in a corner, got up in like eighth, then crashed again and then with a couple laps to go my bike broke. But I was just kind of pissed at the way I was riding because I knew I was a better rider than that and I didn't perform."

"In moto two I came off the start and wheeled a bit and had to shut off and everyone came around me. I got a bad start – like 15th or 16th – and then I made my way into the top 10 and was battling for like seventh most of the race. It's tough when you get a bad start because these guys go so fast that you end up in your own little battle. You look at the guys you were battling with and you're like 'f**k, I was racing top racers like [Austin] Stroupe and [Jake] Weimer and [Tyla] Rattray – these guys win races if they get starts'. I'm not worried about my speed because I know it's good but I just need to focus at the races and have more fun and let it come to me."

DBR: I understand from talking to a lot of other racers that one big difference in America is the first few laps – racers here go balls-out right away instead of sort of pacing themselves early like they do in the GPs. Did you notice this as well?

TS: "Yeah, that seems to be how it works over here – if a guy gets a good start he just puts the hammer down and goes for it. If you're confident enough and have that extra bit of speed then maybe you can take some more time but for me, I'm no faster than any of the top guys so I need to pin it at the beginning to make sure I'm up there so that I can make sure I finish there."

DBR: Do you think there's any sort of added pressure because you've been up front in the GPs and now over here everyone's staring at you and Rattray and Christophe Pourcel and seeing where you guys measure up?

TS: "Maybe but it's like when I'm at the race I just need to go have fun. When ♦



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I'm there I tend to put too much pressure on myself so that's the biggest thing. Normally it wouldn't be a problem but you can't afford to have a bad race over here. It's like last weekend [at Hangtown] I had two bad races and I don't want to be in eighth place battling like that. But it's a long season and I know we'll come through.

"If you look at Pourcel he's doing good and you look at Tyla and he's doing good and I was doing good at the first round – I kind of had a bad second round – but it's tough to learn new tracks. I don't think it's that big of a deal when we all find our feet because we're all strong riders and we all plan to be up there at most rounds."

DBR: What about the weather over here compared to what you're used to in Europe? In the next few races you're probably going to run into some pretty hot, pretty humid events. What have you done to prepare for that?

TS: "Not a lot but we worked hard all winter and I have a pretty good trainer who is good with nutrition and things like that so we're prepared as good as we can be that way. I'm confident we'll be good for the race because of my conditioning and I'm just relying on that. I guess you'll see which guys are fit and which guys aren't so fit at that race."

DBR: And that's the thing – if you're confident in your fitness then you kind of want that sort of weather, right?

TS: "Yeah, I'm happy. I know I've worked hard so I'm not really worried about it right now."

DBR: I'm sure you have a lot of fans back home watching what you're doing so what do you have to say to them?

TS: "I like knowing they're cheering for me and I'll see them in September at the des Nations. Lots of people I've spoken to say they're watching me and they can see it live on the internet at home [at www.allisports.com]. I really want to do well for them because they're all telling me to 'go show the Americans' and things like that so I'm just trying to do that and keep them interested back home."



Tommy Gun's living out his American dream



Mike Alessi does what Mike Alessi does best
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HOTFUSS!

VILLOPOTO WINS THEN DROPS OUT HANDING THE 450 SERIES LEAD TO ALESSI WHILE DOWN IN THE 250s POURCEL AND DUNGEY SCRAP IT OUT – THE AMA NATIONALS HAVE STARTED AND IT'S SHAPING UP TO BE A KILLER SEASON...

AMA NATS WRAP

The thing about being a favourite for a title in a racing series is that it's both a blessing and a curse – but mostly the latter. If you think about it, going into a championship as the favourite means there really isn't an upside. If you win, well, you were supposed to do that so no big deal – but if you don't you're a failure.

Coming into the 2009 Lucas Oil AMA Pro Motocross Championships the clear favourites are the two Ryans – that's Dungey (Rockstar/Makita Suzuki) in the 250 class and Villopoto (Monster Energy Kawasaki) in the 450 class.

Villopoto's undefeated in AMA outdoor championships having won all three of the 250 titles he raced for between 2006 and 2008 and he's just started to come into his own on the 450, winning two of the last three AMA Supercross events prior to the start of the outdoor Nationals. He also benefited in the 'favourite' department by the departure of 2008 450 champ James Stewart who put in a perfect season last year before starting his new gig on the supercross-only L&M Yamaha team.

And as for Dungey? Well, in 2008 he was the only guy to keep Villopoto in sight at a lot of races and he actually won three of the last four AMA Nationals to end the season in the 250 class.

The series kicks off at Southern California's Glen Helen Raceway and the racing order is reversed, starting with the 450 class with the 250 class to follow due to live television. Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Mike Alessi predictably gets the holeshot in moto one before

crashing out of the lead and letting JGR/Toyota Yamaha's Josh Grant hit the front with Villopoto hot on his heels and Alessi recovering for third. Alessi's team-mate Chad Reed, meanwhile, rounds the first turn around mid-pack and then begins working forward.

Grant leads nine of the 14 laps before noticeably tiring and Villopoto pounces, pushing Grant wide and taking over the top spot. The podium is set with Villopoto taking the win over Grant and Alessi while Reed is impressive coming through for 12th.

In moto two it's again Alessi with the holeshot but this time he makes the best of it and starts to check out while Grant sits second, Honda Red Bull Racing's Andrew Short is third, Reed is fourth, Davi Millsaps is fifth and Villopoto is sixth. Villopoto immediately goes to work and two laps later passes Reed (who has displaced Short already) for third before getting hung up behind Grant. Reed picks up on Villopoto's lines and catches him, putting pressure on him before Villopoto squeaks by Grant, leaving Reed stuck.

Two laps later Reed finally finds his way past Grant but Villopoto is already gone, setting sail for Alessi who sports a massive lead. Over the next few laps, though, Villopoto cuts two to three seconds off Alessi's lead every lap before catching the Suzuki rider with only four laps to run. Villopoto makes the pass stick and wins the second moto, winning his first-ever 450cc National with a 1-1 score. Alessi is second in the moto and overall while Reed is third and Grant is fourth.

'Who is Justin Barcia?' is the question on most 250cc fans' lips. Well, he's a rookie racing for the GEICO

Powersports Honda team and he's fast. How fast? He starts behind team-mate Trey Canard in the first 250 moto at Glen Helen, passes him and proceeds to pull away as Canard holds off Muscle Milk KTM's Tommy Searle, Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Christophe Pourcel, Dungey and the rest of the heavy-hitters.

Barcia leads the first eight laps before dropping anchor dramatically. With the aid of a crash, Barcia goes from first to fourth, then to an eventual ninth. And first blood goes to Pourcel who leads Dungey, Canard, Searle and Tyla Ratray home.

Barcia starts third in moto two behind KTM team-mates Martin Davalos (with the holeshot) and Searle but by the end of the first lap Barcia isn't just leading, he's pulling away. By the end of five laps Barcia has nearly a 10-second lead and Ratray has moved past Searle into second. Meanwhile, Dungey is working his way forward methodically and passes Ratray for second on the ninth of 13 circuits and only a lap later he catches a tired looking Barcia out front, moving past the rookie for the lead on the 11th lap.

Ratray follows suit and the finishing order is set with Dungey taking the moto (and overall) win over Ratray, Barcia, Searle, Austin Stroupe, Barcia's team-mate Brett Metcalfe, Pourcel and Canard.

Next up is Hangtown. Little do the fans or the media know but Villopoto hurt his already ailing knee on the Thursday prior to Hangtown but he's a trooper and he shows up to do battle anyway. With Reed fastest in practice for the second weekend in a row, Villopoto



MX2 world champ in 2006, Christophe Pourcel is so far the best of the GP imports



With Ryan Villopoto's shock withdrawal from the 450 class, Mike Alessi is now setting the pace at the top of the standings



Reigning world MX2 champ Tyla Ratray is fourth in the 250cc division



At his fourth attempt Max finally gets some points on the board – but they'll be the first of many

MAXANSTIE!

THE LONG WAIT IS OVER AND OUR STAR EX-PAT IS FINALLY MIXING IT WITH THE PROS IN THE AMA NATIONALS...

Words by MAX ANSTIE Photo by STEVE COX

First of all, a big hello from my new home in Stateside – since I'm now 16 and have turned pro they've bumped me from Rage so it looks like I'm fighting it out with the big boys in DBR as well as out on the track!

Before the AMA Nationals kicked off I raced the world four-stroke championship at Glen Helen as a warm-up for the Nats. Everyone racing the West Coast supercross series didn't race because they had the Salt Lake SX but most of the guys from the East Coast came down to have a run out on the track.

On the startline I was bricking it! I had Pro Circuit's Austin Stroupe to one side of me, Honda's Blake Wharton the other and a few gates down was second in the world Tommy Searle. One thing that was going to throw some of the pros off was that we were starting on concrete and for all their races they start on dirt and I got out the gate well and found myself in third behind Dean Wilson (amateur kid) and Stroupe.

Stroupe found a gap and got around Wilson so I went to work and quickly got around him too and then set my sights on going with Stroupe. Five laps later I had a gap of about 10 seconds to Tommy who was in third battling with Wharton until Tommy got arm-pump and faded back to sixth.

So after a great first ride I was ready to go and mix it up with them again and felt a lot better going into the second moto. Before the first moto I just felt that I shouldn't be racing these guys – it was only last August that I was racing in Holland on my 85cc. Back then I would have never thought that I was going to be racing the likes of Tommy and all the other guys you see on TV. Plus it was my birthday the day before and on the start I recognised that most of the guys I was racing had beards. Ha ha!

A great jump off the concrete put me out front early in the second moto and I found myself with Stroupe again. We were having a great battle and I ended up pushing him off the track at the bottom of one of the hills and we hit together a few times. Eventually he got around me in the sand section and I hung on to him for my life. Three laps later I was still there but a few mistakes

cost me and I ended up coming in six or so seconds behind Stroupe.

But you know what? Racing against these guys made me realise how cool it's going to be racing the pro stuff – at least they talk to you after you have a good race and won't be protesting me about everything from having CIA equipment in my helmet to being on a 650cc.

Moving on... For my birthday I got a sweet DJ set and \$70 so I could start my driver's licence education stuff. Then I put in a couple of good rides at Glen Helen so it was all going good although that was just the dress rehearsal for the opening round of the Nats and coming up to the big day I think I put a lot of pressure on myself.

I wanted to win and really get in there and mix it up with the big guys. I'm riding for the Boost Mobile/Monster Energy/AMPM team. To be honest, now I think about it it's definitely the best team for me to be on for my first season. With J-Law as my team-mate it certainly brings a more relaxed vibe across everyone around the team.

Running right up to the morning of Glen Helen I wasn't feeling that nervous. On the same track only two weeks before I had run with the best at the warm-up race and I knew if I rode like normal everything would fall into place. But as you all probably know it didn't fall into place at all...

Firstly, we messed up and I went out in the B practice so I was riding around with a bunch of muppets and couldn't get a good time in. So I went to the line in 16th which I thought was reasonable but when the 30-second board went up I started thinking... 'Am I really ready for this? These guys I'm lined up next to are full-on adults. We're not racing for trophies anymore. It's all about money. I'm 16. I swear that only a few months ago I looked at guys like Ryan Dungey, Christophe Pourcel, Tommy Searle and Tyla Rattray and thought there's no way I will ever be as fast.' But there I was and then the card went sideways...

I didn't get out the gate too well but found myself coming through. It was nice to be out there with them and not sat at home watching it on TV. Unfortunately, someone went down in front of me

over a blind single about six laps in and I landed on his bike, causing me to pretty much kill the bike and myself. The next thing I knew I was in hospital with a possible broken back and ruptured spleen. After a bloody long time and a load of needles I was allowed back home with nothing broken and everything okay.

I gave myself a couple of days to recover before going back to work and getting ready for Hangtown. I was feeling a lot more confident – even though I didn't finish my first pro race I still rode with those guys and knew I had the speed.

Once again not being used to these races we messed up... I finished 12th in timed training which was an improvement from last week but the officials said I got to the parc ferme 30 seconds late and then made me go onto the start in last which put me way on the outside! I was mid-pack halfway around the first lap when I found myself battling with Dungey and Stroupe and I actually passed Stroupe at one point which made me feel good.

On lap three we were storming through the pack when fellow KTM goon Will Hahn decides to eject going up the face of a jump, putting his bike upsidetown in front of me! Once again there was nothing I could do and I found myself mangled on the floor again. After another visit to the medical centre and more injections I was ready to fight in the second moto!

I got out to an awesome start and found myself in fourth going into the third corner but going up one of the hills I hit neutral and dropped back to seventh. After about four laps Searle came underneath me in a corner but left the door open in the next one so we did a little bar banging and I got back around him. Then halfway through the first race we started having a few mechanical issues and I eventually dropped back to 12th.

But finally I finished a moto! I have had the worst luck over these past two weeks and it's going to change soon. I really can't wait for the rest of the season. We will keep doing our work and moving forward. It's already been a great experience and to actually be a part of a professional sport is almost unbelievable! Dreams can come true!



Chad Reed's late entry into the 450 class has got the series buzzing – expect wins from him when he finds his feet outdoors

SERIES STANDINGS

250cc

1	Ryan Dungey	86 points
2	Christophe Pourcel	84
3	Trey Canard	75
4	Tyla Ratray	70
5	Brett Metcalfe	63
6	Justin Barcia	54
7	Jake Weimer	53
8	Blake Wharton	52
9	Tommy Searle	48
10	Broc Tickle	47
19	Steven Clarke	13
20	Max Anstie	9

450cc

1	Mike Alessi	92 points
2	Josh Grant	74
3	Chad Reed	73
4	Ryan Villopoto	55
5	Tommy Hahn	52
6	Andrew Short	51
7	Dan Reardon	41
8	Matt Goerke	41
9	Ivan Tedesco	40
10	Cody Cooper	37



Davi Millsaps has yet to break the top 10

goes down in the first turn in moto one (with rival Jason Lawrence) while Alessi again grabs the holeshot.

Alessi goes down on the opening lap, handing the lead to Ivan Tedesco before getting up in sixth. Reed finishes the opening lap in 17th. Tedesco leads more than half the race before Alessi finally gets close enough to make a pass stick on lap 10 of 16 and sets sail for the chequered flag. Tedesco hangs on for second while Short is third. Reed gets as high as sixth by the finish but Villopoto – coming from dead last – only catches up to 16th.

Between motos Villopoto makes it clear that he's dropping out of moto two with his injured knee and it eventually leads to him being out of the championship completely. The door is wide open!

For the first time in four motos Alessi doesn't get the holeshot in moto two – instead it goes to Grant followed by Tedesco, Alessi, Reed and Short. Reed has trouble getting going early in the moto and loses fourth to Short for a couple laps before regaining the position on lap four. In the meantime, Alessi can do nothing with Grant out front after passing Tedesco for second. Before long Reed gets Tedesco too and moves into third.

At about the halfway point Alessi makes his move on Grant only for Grant to pass him back – three times –

before retaining the lead. So Alessi figures discretion is the better part of valour and falls back. Reed is catching them both but time runs out with Grant taking the win over Alessi and Reed.

However, after the race Grant is docked a position for jumping a jump under a new yellow/red caution flag and the moto win is awarded to Alessi. So Alessi leads the championship with 10 rounds and 20 motos still left to run.

As the 250 riders head to Hangtown it's Barcia who's the surprise while Dungey has done what he was supposed to do. In moto one Barcia grabs yet another holeshot and takes off with Pourcel in second then Canard, Metcalfe, Searle, Steven Clarke, Ratray and the rest of the field. Dungey goes down in the second turn and gets up last.

Barcia pulls out a huge lead over the first few laps, putting down 2:06 lap times to Pourcel's 2:07s. However, at about lap eight Barcia's times drop to 2:08s and Pourcel's are still 2:07s – it's just a matter of time. Pourcel catches Barcia on lap 14 of 17 and passes Barcia two laps later, taking the moto win over Barcia, Canard, Ratray, Metcalfe, Broc Tickle and Dungey. Searle has a bit of a 'mare, falling twice before his bike breaks.

Dungey fights off GEICO rider Blake Wharton for the moto two holeshot while Wharton hangs on for second over Pourcel, Canard, Metcalfe, PJ Larsen, Tickle, Max Anstie and the rest of the field. Barcia rounds the first turn well back in the pack but immediately goes to work, finishing lap one in 13th and sitting sixth only five laps later. However, evidently tired, he begins losing positions again at the halfway point and then crashes out of contention on lap 15 of 17.

It takes Pourcel two laps to pass Wharton and by the time he gets by Dungey has just enough of a cushion that Pourcel can't catch him. Dungey takes the moto win while Pourcel is second, Canard is third, Metcalfe is fourth and Wharton is fifth.

However, just as with the 450 second moto, Pourcel is docked a position for jumping under the same flag that nicked Grant – as are five other 250 riders. Pourcel still takes the overall win with a 1-3 but Dungey leads the points with 20 motos still left to run.

For Tommy Gun it's another tough race and he has to fight through the pack for ninth. And after finishing out of the points in the opening moto Anstie finally gets some points under his belt with a 12th second time out while Scuba Steve Clarke is super-consistent with a pair of 15th places...

OUTSIDELINE!

WITH TWO ROUNDS DOWN OUR INDUSTRY INSIDER SHARES HIS TAKE ON THE 2009 AMA NATIONALS...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

The motocross season is in full swing by the time you read this and we're going knackers-out to try and figure out what's going to happen over here. Much like your beloved GPs, there is finally parity over here with Carmichael and Stewart both not participating in the series.

We thought Kawasaki's Ryan Villopoto was the favourite in the 450 class but then he went out and tore up his knee. He's done for the season and we have Mike Alessi now assuming the role of points leader. Mike will definitely be there all year but I think he's going to get a bit of a challenge from a couple of riders that we didn't really know about before the season. And for different reasons.

Joe Gibbs Yamaha's Josh Grant was the surprise of the supercross season for his opening round win at Anaheim and his ability to really run with the front pack. Josh, who could never quite pull it together for Honda when he rode 250Fs, really shocked the establishment with his skills and his ability to run up front. This kid also took a horrendous beating on a number of occasions – he got taken to the woodshed a few times with his YZ450 playing the role of the disciplining parent – but just kept getting up.

Nothing could knock this guy out of the game. He'd get up and go just as fast. We've always known that Grant had the skills but now he is applying himself off the track as well. The rewards for him are coming in now. This was apparent when he ran away with the second moto at Hangtown, beating Alessi in the process and showing he has the speed and fitness to be a factor all summer.

The other rider is Chad Reed. Unlike Grant, we knew about his speed. We just didn't know if he was going to ride the Nationals. Reedy had enjoyed his previous three summers off and did what a supercross champion does, he rested. When he lost the supercross championship at the last round, most figured that would be all we would see of the #22. Just days before the opening motocross at Glen Helen, Chad shocked the MX world with the words "I'm in" and that was that. We had one of the premier riders in the world suiting up and showing us that he was ready.

So far, after four motos, it hasn't come easy for him. Some terrible starts followed by charges through the pack and he has yet to do better than third. You can see it coming back for him though, Reedy will be a major factor in the title at some point. He told me that he doesn't really trust the surface of the track yet, he says that's what he lost in his time away. The ability to trust the track and the

tyres on the Suzuki. He said it's getting better and we all know it will.

Here are some other thoughts about the first couple of rounds...

Right now it looks to be shaping up to be Pro Circuit's Christophe Pourcel or Suzuki's Ryan Dungey who will fight it out for the title. They are a step above Trey Canard, Justin Barcia and anyone else.

moto in Hangtown but they were right by each other and, second moto, Rattray got Searle on the last lap for seventh. These guys are going to be sick of each other real soon.

The Nationals are where you can really make your mark if you're a privateer and the first true privateer in the 250 class is Ben Evans. Ben is doing all the nationals on his own dime and trying to make a go of it. He had a supercross-only ride and

for guys like him and his SX team-mate Alex Martin it's a tough deal but you HAVE to ride Nationals. Riding seven or eight races in supercross and no Nats will get you forgotten quickly. It's Catch 22 – ride the Nationals to get a good ride or not afford to ride the Nationals because you don't have a good ride. Troy Adams is doing the same in the 450s and coming around. Cheer for these blokes!

My buddy Tim Ferry is not having a good 2009 season and the old saying 'when it rains, it pours' applies to Red Dog here. The guy can't catch a break (or maybe he is and that's the problem) because in practice he high-sided and went down right on his melon. He was seeing tweety birds for a while and the decision was made to hold him out for the day. If I had to guess I'd say the combo of his head injury, his heel not being 100 per cent, his lack of seat time and everything else means you don't see him for a few weeks while he just gets better and pushes reset on his year.

There's absolutely nothing to say about Jason Lawrence. He's done nothing on the track but plenty off the track. We're all waiting to see this kid turn it on. Will it come? Nobody knows.

The forgotten man at JGR, Cody Cooper is not going to be forgotten much longer. Coopster rode great in the first moto, he had a podium spot at Hangtown until two laps to go when Andrew Short got by him and second moto not sure what happened but was waaaaa back. Anyways, Hangtown was where he opened some eyes last year and he did it again. He's going to just get better also. Good for JGR to finally

have things going their way with both guys on it.

I've been going around and quizzing some people on the Saturday format and I think it's a positive change. The fear was that you were missing out on some practice but it really wasn't that big of a deal to ride those 30 minutes on Saturdays. The buzz is still around and the guys get on the track plenty. The teams and riders I have spoken to love being at home on Sunday to spend a bit of time with their families. Just like Friday SX practice that went away and no-one cares now.



Pre-season favourite Ryan Villopoto (#2) doubled up at Glen Helen but a knee injury means he's now out for the season

Geico Honda is on fire right now. Dan Reardon is doing well, Justin Barcia is the talk of the 250s and let's not forget Trey Canard and Brett Metcalfe. Every start has seen the Geico 250s up front and charging hard. It's a complete change from their supercross season and couldn't happen to a nicer bunch of guys. Third, fifth, sixth and eighth in the points (with Reardon seventh in 450s) is a nice start.

Tommy Searle and Tyla Rattray were really close in speed last year in the GPs and they are still real close over here in the USA. Both motos they were riding by each other at Glen Helen and also at Hangtown. The KTM of Searle blew up in the first

THINK FIT!

INJURIES HAPPEN TO THE BEST OF US AND THE WAY WE DEAL WITH THEM MENTALLY CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE TO HOW WE RECOVER FROM THEM PHYSICALLY...

Words by Neil Drew

Injury is something that almost every competitor will face at some time or another but if we understand what typically happens as a result and some of the many things that we can do to help ourselves then we are well placed to make a better recovery and return to previous levels of skill and ability.

The consequences of any injury aren't just the physical effects that you can either see or feel, they go much deeper and they can affect the mind. Obviously, what we're discussing in this article is in the most part dependant upon the length of time that any competitor is sidelined for and whether or not recovery will be 100 per cent complete. Also, we cannot take into consideration the many different types of personality. What we will do is to consider a scenario where a competitor is out of competition for a couple of months with a broken limb although much of what we discuss is still valid to a shorter term injury as well.

With any absence from sport there are a number of factors that affect a competitor's ability to get back into competition and perform at the same level at which they were before their absence. In terms of injury there are the significant effects of an inability to exercise and maintain fitness levels plus, of course, there's the lack of actual practice time on the bike and having the right level of bike fitness.

One of the things that goes through any competitor's mind is how their rivals will be gaining points and places on them, how they will be increasing in their ability. The tendency is to focus more on the problem than the solution, more on the effects of what has happened rather than how they are going to get back to what they love best. All of this leads to increased anxiety – loss of confidence in their ability, loss of confidence about returning to competition. Frustration can very often set in, then comes a loss of motivation for any form of exercise and very often a loss of motivation to succeed when they do return to race.

The first step is acceptance. When we accept that something is temporarily affecting us – and that it is temporary – we free the mind up from focussing too much on the how and why it happened. It stops the drama, the self pity and misery – then it's easier to move to the next stage.

The first thing I do with any of my clients that get injured, besides getting them to accept the temporary problem, is to explore what alternative exercise they can do and discuss the advantages

of a personal trainer or physiotherapist. Then there's the need to follow a diet plan to make sure they stay as close as possible to their preferred weight. Again, I will advise my client to consider using a dietician or nutritionist.

When you have this knowledge the next stage is to set some goals. By setting goals you have something to aim for and this always creates motivation – especially if the goals are achievable, realistic, measurable, have timed stages and most importantly are self-initiated and self-maintained.

When setting goals for recovery and return to sport from injury the first important stage is to find out when the most likely return date is – this will serve as the long-term focus. The next stage is to work out some stages and targets along the way. This can be achieved by having anyone who is helping such as a physiotherapist or trainer work with you on deciding what steps are necessary for you to get back to full recovery and competition again. Find out the expected periods of time that – in the case of a leg break – walking and then running could be started and whether swimming could be started and when. Ask lots of questions – the better the knowledge and understanding the better the goals can be and therefore the better motivation can be achieved.

Let's say that a competitor was off for 12 weeks with some sort of break. The goals should be set at weekly stages and each stage should be a clear target with specific details of what you want to achieve. Then another set of goals should be employed for the return to competition. For example, a specific date should be determined for when you get back onto a bike, how many practice sessions you will do and when, what the first competition will be, what results you expect to get, how long it is going to take you to get back to your previous level of competition and so on.

Something else very helpful in recovery is relaxation. Refer back to the article in the March 2009 issue where we talked about the best way to relax prior to competition – this is a great technique for being able to shut off and get some rest. Another technique is to while resting visualise in your mind the injury healing – this you can do at any time simply by closing your eyes and imagining it healing, what it will look like healed up, seeing and feeling your normal movement. If you have been reading our other articles you will know about the language that we use setting us up for our behaviour and our emotional responses.



DREWWHO?

COMPETITION MIND COACH

Neil Drew is a former MX and enduro racer and a qualified sports mind coach. At present he is coaching two national champions and several GP competitors and has helped many amateur and professional athletes from all over the world. He can be contacted via DBR or by email at neil@competitionmind.co.uk



HEAVY FETTLE!

STEED OFF-SONG? MOSICKLE SOUNDING SICK? DIRT SCOOT OUT OF TUNE? WELL WE KNOW JUST THE MAN WITH MUSIC TO YOUR EARS...

Words by Geoff Walker

KNOCK, KNOCK

Dear Geoff,

I hope you can help me. I have a '05 CRF250. The bike has developed a 'knocking' noise and I cannot tell if it is coming from the top of the engine or the bottom of the engine. When I heard the noise I stopped the bike straight away and pushed it back to my trailer. Any help would be appreciated.

Gary, via email

Your knocking noise could obviously be a lot of things and without hearing the bike myself it's a difficult one. Sometimes the problem is only easy to find when the bike grinds to a complete halt! Laugh!

It sounds to me like one of your inlet valves has stretched and maybe cracked under the pressure of you lettin' 'er 'ave it during your riding. The inlet valves on the CRF tend to stretch quicker than the exhaust valves therefore making them likely to crack and drop down towards the piston causing the two components to touch and this as you can imagine is not a good situation.

Hopefully you have caught it just in time to stop major damage but, alas, with all four-strokes you could be in for a hefty MacKenzie (Bill) to put things right. When the top-end is off you would be best to replace all the valves and valve running gear and seals as well as the piston and cam chain. I hope this helps.

SEIZED SUZI

Hi Geoff,

I'm after some advice on what to do about my RMZ450. I went to my local track on Sunday and on my last go out the bike seized up. I bought the bike last October brand new – it's an '08 but it's only seven months old.

What really annoys me is that it's only had seven to eight hours ride time and I've done four oil changes – one of those being on the Sunday before it seized. I've been riding bikes since 1984 and have a lot of knowledge about bikes (I generally work on my own machines) but this has stunned me. Unfortunately, it's out of warranty by a month.

Suzuki say they have never heard of this problem with this bike so it is uncommon. They told me my local dealer can strip it to find out what's happened for £45-an-hour labour and if they found it was a manufacturing fault they might be able to fix it as an act of good will.

This would be great if it's in for three hours and I got the bike back working but not so good if it's in for 10 hours and they say it's not their fault! Can you please help me or suggest other options as Suzuki haven't been helpful at all!

Paul, via email

This is a difficult one. If there's a chance of the Suzuki dealer fixing the problem on a 'good will' basis that seems to be the way to go. If there was a different oil used with the final oil change this could cause a problem as some oils do not mix well and could cause heat on a cam causing it to seize. Unfortunately, these are mechanical devices and a four-stroke motorcycle has a lot of moving parts just waiting to go wrong.



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FOULPROBLEM

Hey Geoff,

I recently bought an old '86 CR250 two-stroke that I'm restoring as a fun project but when I have the bike running it keeps fouling the plugs and I have to put a new plug in after around 10 minutes for it to start up again. I have tried a few things to sort it out but none have worked and the problem is still happening. I've no clue what it could be. Do you?

Nick, via email

I would suggest checking the reed valve first of all and then you may have to get into the stator and go for a rewound unit to get the spark up to a strong state. Make sure there is no blue in the smoke from the tailpipe as this can mean there's a pinhole in the crankcases or a leaking clutch side crank seal which could be letting gearbox oil into the cylinder area.

TRAVELAGENT

Dear Geoff,

I took your advice with the o-ring on my front forks and it is great to see the travel I am using. My forks are not using the last three inches of travel at any time at any track I ride at. Is there an easy way to soften the forks without making my bike feel really different? I have not touched anything on the suspension as I am not confident to make changes. My bike is a KX250.

Mark, via email

As long as you don't go too mad with changes you can get your bike working closer to its potential. I would advise you to make small changes with the compression clickers on the forks and shock together to get you using more of your travel.

On your bike the compression clickers are at the TOP of the fork. Simply turn the clicker with a flat head screwdriver in an anti-clockwise direction four clicks for a start. Do the same on the TOP clicker on your rear shock to keep the balance you are used to with your bike. This will allow you to use a little more of your stroke while retaining control of the overall action of your chassis.

If you have to go too many clicks to get the use of the entire travel you should probably take your suspension to one of the top susser companies around for a good set-up.

SMOOTHMOVE

Hi DBR,

I've been trying to find an article that Geoff Walker wrote about how to smooth out the power on a KX250 two-stroke. I think it was a year or two ago but I would be really grateful if you could help. I had the magazine but it must have got thrown out!

I think I remember him fitting extra gaskets and possibly a flywheel weight. I want to keep the bike for motocross but want to mellow the power a bit (without spending a fortune). Oh, by the way my bike is a 2006 model.

I find Geoff's 'how to' page really helpful so thanks for that.

Martin, via email

The KX is a sweet ride to smooth out. I used to add an extra base gasket to make the power longer and much smoother and another mod we used on the mag machine was a DEP enduro tail pipe. This made a fantastic amount of difference to the power delivery making the bike a real pleasure to ride.

CRACKLEANDPOP!

Wakka,

I hope you can help me. I have a 2006 KXF250. I love my bike but it has started to backfire and pop like crazy. It will not stop crackling – I even got my mate to change the carb to a richer setting but it's not worked. Any ideas?

Wayne, via email

Crackling you say? Popping you say? Backfiring no less? I think the problem sounds like you could have some air in your system. The first place you should check for this kind of problem would be the header (front) pipe. If your pipe has been damaged in the past it may not be sealing correctly at the head. I have also known the header pipes to split slightly with a hairline crack. This will be enough to develop your kind of problem and is simple to spot if you simply whip the front pipe off and inspect it carefully.

HONDAPRESSURE

Hello Geoff,

I'm in need of help! I've got a '02 CR125 which I've owned for two years now and it's spent more time in the garage than on the track.

I got my barrel nicosilled plus all bottom-end bearings changed and ran the bike in for about hour, then decided to open her up to check all was running sweet. I was wheeling in the first three gears easy for about 10 minutes and then 'pop', my crank seal went and spat out white smoke, covered my back in black oil plus the power valve jammed open.

So back to the garage again where the mechanic repaired her. But since then I'm really struggling with acceleration – especially coming out of corners. I'm getting left behind by everybody! I've even fitted Boyesen power reeds...

Please can you give me some advice about how I can get around this. All I seem to do is put money into her – I spent around £800 easily last year trying to put her right

Davy, via email

It sounds like your power valve could still be having some issues. If it is not returning to the fully closed position you will be lacking a lot of bottom-end grunt and on your bike that will be pretty important if you are up against some newer models out there on the track. You should remove your exhaust pipe and take off the power valve cover, re-fit your pipe and start the bike up. When you rev the bike you should see the actuating arm move from fully closed to fully open. Make sure the action is complete and smooth.

A fresh-faced Wakker with his KX250



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94 MAINTENANCE AND ADJUSTMENT

Torque table

	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
ENGINE																			
Cylinder Bolts																			
Camshaft Cap Bolts																			
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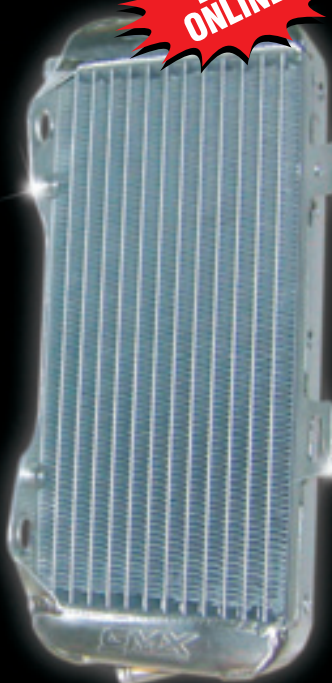
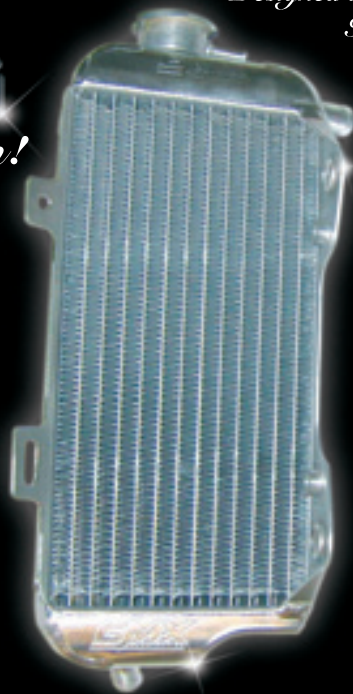
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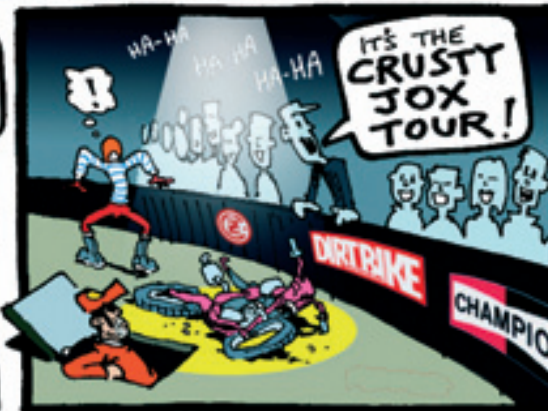
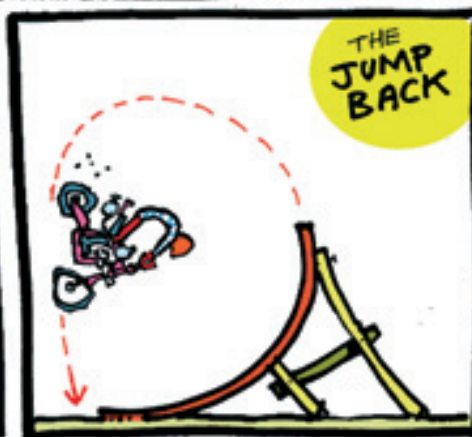
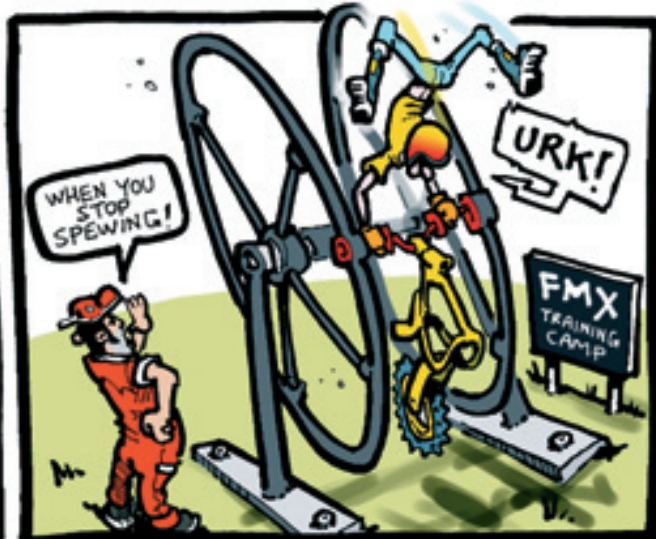
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BACK IN T'BACK!

AFTER A TWO-YEAR HIATUS SUTTY RETURNS TO THE TRACK – AND THE BACK OF THE PACK – IN HIS LONG AWAITED COMPETITIVE MOTOCROSS COMEBACK

Words by Sully Photos by mtmx.co.uk

Believe it or not it's more than two years since I last lined up behind a backwards-falling startgate and participated in a good bit of all-out bar banging in the guise of a motocross race. But with the factory fo-fiddy CCM CMX450 prepped and ready for the task in hand and the appropriate licence and race entry super-efficiently sorted it was time to get back into it and take on some of Britain's best racers at the third round of the MMX series.

To say I was unprepared for this race is something of an understatement – with deadlines and work commitments stopping me from riding for most of April the plan was to ride, ride, ride throughout the whole of May and magically motocross myself into some sort of bike fitness.

However, that plan went awry when on the third corner of a Dirtbike-Traxs hare scramble at Gisburn on the second weekend in May (step two of my preparation for the MMX round – partaking in the Factory Fatty diet being the first) I successfully managed to hit a trackside marker post hard enough to wrap my shift lever right around the frame. No biggie you might think but it was more than just the gear lever itself that was bent, the shift shaft was most definitely shafted too so there was not gonna be any quick bolt-on fix coming out of Bolton – my badly beaten beast badly needed stripping down.

Unfortunately for my cause the race technician at the CCM factory – Paul Atkinson – had his hands full preparing a pair of factory flat trackers and my team-mate Alix Dunlop's CMX250 for her upcoming British championship round so my race bike had to join the back of the queue. This meant that after Paul had finished his other jobs and then got around to cutting my shafted shift shaft out, replacing it with a shiny new one and then fully prepping my puppy it was more or less time to load it into TranDawg™ before steering my way south to Somerset.

Heading into the race weekend I had been thinking that it might have been wise to leave the bike in my workshop/kitchen over the Bank Holiday so I could head to the beach instead. But the very moment that I lifted my piece of handcrafted factory firepower from the stand that thought instantly left my head.

Paul had obviously worked his balls off to get my race machine ready, all the controls felt light and fresh and a spanking new pair of Goldentyres had been popped on the rims. I knew then that if I didn't go race that bike, that weekend that I wouldn't have been worthy of the title of Factory Fatty and somehow I didn't think that being known as the Factory Fanny was anywhere near so glamorous – not in my line of work at least...

Race day dawned bright and sunny although the BBC news promised a heavy storm shower or two was headed our way throughout the day. Not great when wet, the venue for the race – Asham Woods – is a little bit special in my mind. It's a proper old-school track that has hills and rocks and ruts and grass, it's fast and some might say a little bit dangerous too but a circuit that still creates some great racing regardless.

Unfortunately the Open and U21 championship races were being held the day after a sidecar support, quad and women's championship rounds

so the track was beaten to buggery before we'd even turned a wheel. Already mostly stripped of soil and polished up, the slight morning drizzle and overnight watering had left the Frome track surface slicker than a snake oil salesman for quali but it was the same for everyone.

I screwed up my first timed lap by pirouetting in turn three, the second by almost high siding in turn two and my third was relatively okay although my complete lack of fitness ensured I was flagging near the end of the two-minute lap – ha ha! Although my time placed me a lowly 38th – out of 39! – I was still quite chuffed that my pace wasn't too far off the riders just ahead of me.

Still with only the 38th pick at the gate there wasn't much chance of bagging a good start so far from the outside of the ridiculously unfair start at Frome but I had a cunning plan that had worked way back in the day at Asham Woods. Starting from the second row, both myself and CAS Honda's Scott Ainsworth had turned our diabolical positions into top five starts as the leading contenders had drifted wide in the 180 degree first turn allowing us to cut back inside them. Could it work again 11 years later?

The short answer was no! However, I did still manage to get away slap bang in the middle of the pack – I'm told somewhere between 15th and 20th position – which put me right in the thick of the action. The intensity of the first few laps of a motocross race is something I've definitely missed and the opening of this gambit was just so much fun with rocks and roost flying everywhere and everyone trying to gain the smallest of advantages by making cheeky passes wherever possible. Sweet.

While I was already breathing out of my ass the CCM was in its element – the well thought out geometry making turning underneath the competition ridiculously easy while the strong, tractable motor made running with the pack early on a doddle.

But just as the race was settling down a little I fell victim to somebody else's mistake – we tangled bars briefly and I fell in a slow turn before getting run into from behind – nothing major just one of those things when everyone's battling for position. By the time I'd restarted the bike everyone else was pretty much gone so I pressed on to the finish regardless ensuring I kept out of everyone's way as I was lapped and then lapped again. The 25-minute plus two lap moto was a real shock to the system and by the end of it I was really hanging.

Between motos I did my best to recuperate and mulled over the fact that at 33 years of age I was most definitely the oldest rider in the race – blimey!

The ACU steward put a stop to my second row shenanigans for moto two which meant I had to start from the very outside. I didn't get the best drive from the line but was able to cut back inside everyone to get another mid-pack start, only this time a rear wheel puncture caused by the razor-sharp rocks Frome's so famous for called an end to my fun three laps in.

I wasn't too bummed out though, regardless of the bad results I felt like it was quite a successful day and I've definitely recaptured the bug for racing motocross again. Now I just need to keep on keeping on and letting the good times roll!



And relax...





Sutty No Mates goes for a second row start – well it's worked before

EPIC FAIL!

IT'S BEEN PREENED, PRIMPED AND PREPPED AND THE WRF MAGAZINE MACHINE IS GOOD TO GO – IT'S JUST NOT GOING TO GO VERY FAR...

Words by **Sean Lawless** Photos by **Sutty**

It has not – by anyone's standards – been a good month in the life of the long-term WR250F magazine machine. And yet – just like the bike itself with its magic button – it all started so well...

When I signed off last issue we'd lovingly slapped on an FMF PowerBomb/Q4 combo but hadn't sorted the jetting required to go with it. So with the Dirtbike-Traxs hare scramble looming I popped down the M6 to Blackburn where those good, honest Lancashire folk at The Rocket Centre had assorted jets and dyno on stand-by.

To say The Rocket Centre is impressive would be an understatement – this place is plusher than a set of fully-dialled factory Kayabas and as we rolled up Sutty remarked that 'even the booty wagon's posh, look it's got an awning' after a quick glance at the portable eatery in the corner of the car park...

The huge glass showroom majors on road burners but there's a tasty display of dirt scoots in their own section and it was here we met up with Stewart the General Manager who took us through the spotless workshop area to meet Johnno the Dyno Man. First off he needed a slick on the back as the dyno eats knobbies for breakfast so out came the WRF's rear wheel and off came the sprocket and disc which were then bolted onto an already slick-shod hoop.

Even with the FMF system in place the Yam's still got a lot more to give and the dyno reading for the base run indicated 29.66hp with the spark arrestor removed. In a bid to squeeze out a bit more *oomph* Johnno removed the grey wire to the ECU, altering the ignition curve back to that of a YZF. The exhaust gas recycling thingie had to go as well.

The dyno showed that the WRF was running waaaay too rich so Dyno Johnno set to work and eventually went down from the stock 170 main jet to a 160. All these tweaks and tickles combined to produce a final run reading – this time with the spark arrester back on – of 32.84hp. Not bad for a job that takes about half-an-hour. Good work Dyno Johnno – clearly a man who loves what he does and does what he loves very well.

While the rear wheel was off we also took the opportunity to get a Michelin S12 chucked on and grab some numbers for the Dirtbike-Traxs race at Gisburn – then it was just a case of motoring back up the M6 for an early finish to what was a very productive Friday. So far so good but, of course, it couldn't possibly last...

Race day dawned nice and bright and with the venue only half-an-hour down the road – and kicking off at 1pm – I spent a relaxed morning mixing up a batch of ISO2 Complete Energy, filling my OGIO Erzberg drinks system and generally doing what your granny would call 'pottering'. Sutty even managed to swing by bang on time so with TranDawg™ fully loaded we were off.

I'd been to Gisburn once before for a Gas Gas enduro test a few years back and I didn't exactly have fond memories of it – lots of cloying mud and innocent-enough looking climbs that offered all the tractable qualities of golden syrup spring to mind. But hey-ho, I was certainly feeling fitter than on the Gasser test and I was racing

a bike I was at least fairly familiar with.

DBR mascot Laura Ward had planned to start alongside us but her bike had soiled itself a few weeks before. Still, Laura being Laura she'd driven across from Hull just to crew for us and was patiently waiting as we rolled up. It wouldn't be her only patient wait of the afternoon.

For the race Sutty had a place on the front row while I set up shop a couple of rows further back and then it was just a matter of warming the WRF up and waiting for the off. When it was time for everyone to kill their engines I knew Sutty would be fretting about his ability to fire up the factory CCM CMX450 first kick so when the roost and smoke from the front line blasting off cleared I was pleased to see there was no sign of the big lump.

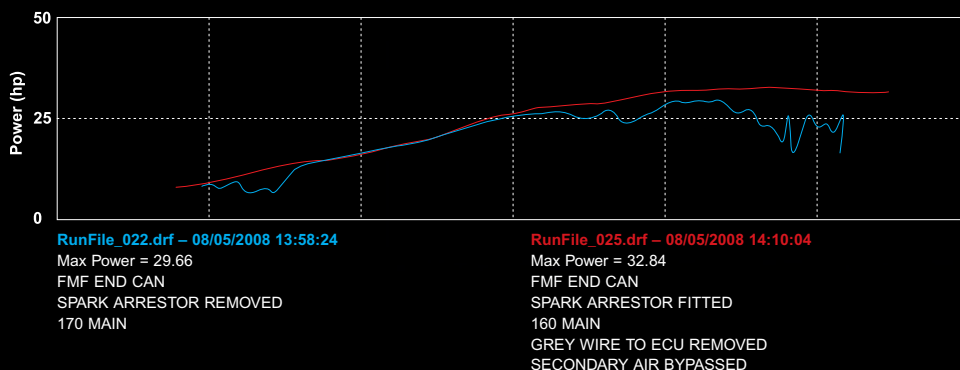
Of course, I had a leccy boot so it was never going to be an issue for me but I still managed to fudge my start and entered the first corner closer to the back than the front. I've got to admit I wasn't prepared for the instant intensity of it – you go from dead engine to right in the thick of it in a matter of moments and the opening lap is a battle for survival with riders banging bars and sliding off all over the place.

This made it really hard for me to find anything approaching a rhythm but after riding like a dick all the way down to the river I actually managed to pass a few people on the first snotty climb thanks to the combination of Dyno Johnno's skills and the fresh Michelin rubber. It was to be the only high point of the day for me and a few minutes later my race was well and truly run...

The course dived right and back down to the river before hanging a sharp left up the first major – and crappiest – climb of the day. This is where my inexperience really told and instead of taking a moment to weigh up my line I just launched up a likely looking rut, got balked by someone halfway up and ground to a sweaty, sweaty halt. Luckily my mate Jay and his sidekick Silent Bob, sorry, Paul were on hand but it quickly became apparent that even with the throttle pinned the back wheel wasn't spinning – and then there was that distinct whiff of a fried clutch. Game over...

And just to rub salt into the wounds of Team DBR, Sutty had clobbered a course-marking stake on the third corner and bent his gear shaft. So when he eventually came round on his opening lap after wasting a shedload of time trying to straighten it he was jammed in second gear and heading for an early bath as well. Of course, technically this means I'd actually passed the big lad and was actually leading him in an actual race when I actually DNFed – all of which is actually no consolation to anyone. Least of all to Laura who had made a 200-mile round trip to handle the refuelling and didn't actually get to refuel anyone. What a slacker!

At the time of writing the WRF is sat in the DBR storeroom waiting for a new clutch (thanks EBC!) to be fitted and an assortment of pretty things courtesy of Madison and Renthal to be sprinkled over it so I really can live up to the 'all the gear and no idea' stereotype. And I've also got another hare and hounds lined up at the end of this month when, hopefully, I might manage more than half-a-lap – but I wouldn't bet on it...



Dyno Johnno gets his groove on at the Rocket Centre



TOP CATS!

CHEERS M'DEARS...

The list is short and sweet this month but my thanks are by no means less heartfelt. First up, Stewart and Dyno Johnno at the Rocket Centre (rocketcentre.com) – I can't recommend these gents' services strongly enough or the tasty (if a bit sweary) offerings available at Taffy's Pit Stop (taffyspitstop.co.uk) in the car park. Secondly, John and his Dirtbike-Traxs (dirtbike-traxs.com) team who put on first-class hare scrambles events. Lastly – but by no means leastly – Natalie Brown at EBC Brakes (ebcbrakes.com) for my new clutch. Bless you all...





STEPPING UP!

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

TOO OLD FOR THE ENDURO JUNIOR CLASS AND WANTING MORE THAN THE EUROPEAN ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP CAN OFFER, SI WAKELY IS MIXING IT WITH THE BIG BOYS OF THE WEC – AND LOVING IT...

In his first senior season in the WEC
Si is flying the flag for privateers
against the factory-supported stars

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The E2 class is possibly the most competitive in the WEC but Si is certainly not there just to make up the numbers

If there's one thing that makes the World Enduro Championship unique it's the diverse mix of full-time professionals and aspiring privateers. While other sports cater only for the elite – and some only for those with serious financial backing – the WEC still allows determined up-and-comers the chance to get themselves in the mix, hopeful of beating the great and the good.

Britain's Si Wakely is one of those hopeful privateers. Backed by enthusiastic MPS Husqvarna team owner Mick Seward, Husky Sport head honcho Mike Carter and his mum and dad, Si is doing much more than simply making up the numbers when it comes to the WEC. In fact Si is doing rather well considering the number of factory-backed riders in the E2 class.

Competing in what is arguably one of the WEC's toughest divisions, what Si lacks in physical stature he is more than making up for with his performances. With three rounds of the '09 series over Si is placed as the highest ranking privateer in the E2 championship standings. More impressively, on day one of the recent GP of Italy he claimed his first ever top 10 result and in doing so finished ahead of half-a-dozen full-time, factory-backed riders.

"We've had a few ups and downs but the first three rounds of the WEC have been great," comments Si enthusiastically. "The biggest difference this season is that I'm racing in the events, not just riding in them. It takes a while to really feel a part of the championship, like you're there because you can be competitive and not just to make up the numbers. I'm really enjoying the events."

With no real salary to speak of, no enviable end-of-season bonus scheme or championship-winning golden carrot being dangled in front of him, Si is driven by just one thing – the desire to do his very best. Oh and the enjoyment of trying to put factory-backed riders behind him in the results.

"You can't have a full-time job and compete

in the WEC, not properly," explains Si.

"To compete against the factory riders you need to be working as hard as they are and training and riding as much as possible.

I know that committing full-time and not getting paid isn't something I can do forever but I'm really enjoying my racing. Really enjoying it. I couldn't do it without the support of the MPS Husqvarna team, Husky Sport and my parents but while they're backing me I'll give 100 per cent."

While both privateers and factory-backed riders alike share the same common goal of performing as well as they can, the enjoyment factor of 'going racing' is arguably even more important to Si. "Beating factory-backed riders is really satisfying, not just for myself but for everyone in the team. It gives everyone a real boost. The MPS Racing Husqvarna team runs more on enthusiasm than anything else so good results are our best reward. I don't want for anything which allows me to focus on my riding and racing. It really is a team effort."

Knowing that he would be competing in the

Enduro 2 class of the WEC this season, Si was well aware that unless he worked hard during the off-season he'd get smoked as soon as the GP season started. But stepping up into the senior ranks of the world championship was also a move Si was looking forward to.

"My confidence in WEC events has been increasing over the last few years. The events are tougher than ever now and there are a lot of really good riders competing. The team were 100 per cent into being a part of the WEC for '09 which meant I could focus on the WEC and the BEC. My results started to improve towards the end of last year so I knew that if I pushed hard I'd be able to get close to the top 10 of the E2 class. The competition is tough but I'm enjoying my racing more this season than I ever have."

Helping Si steadily work his way up the results sheets of the E2 class of the WEC is the fact that he stands on solid foundations – an apprenticeship in the European Enduro Championship. First venturing into Europe in '03, his only full season of EEC competition >>





in '07 saw him collect the E2 Junior title.

"The EEC was great for me. International events are so much different to British enduros – there's just so much more competition. At first you feel a little out of place but you soon start to get your head around the format of the events and having to give your all from the start to the finish of each day.

"Jumping straight into the WEC is a lot harder than most riders realise. If you're a rider like Johnny Aubert or Antoine Meo it's fine but there have been a lot of other good motocross racers that have disappeared after just one season. Competing in the EEC certainly bridges the gap between national and world championship competition. WEC races are hard and it takes time before you feel like you're really there giving your best and not just trying to survive."

Last season was Si's – and the MPS Husqvarna team's – first in the WEC. With Si wanting to make the most of his final season as a junior competitor and wanting to compete in the Enduro Junior class, it was a year that geographically took the team further than ever before.

"I had to move to the senior class of the EEC as I'd won a junior title the year before so we decided to switch to the WEC. I guess you could say it was a bitter sweet season because I had some good races and some not so good races."

The good was unquestionably his podium finish at the GP of Wales. Admitting that it was one of the hardest events he's ever competed in,

Si – cheered on by home supporters – finished third on day one and fifth on day two. "That was definitely the highlight of the year. I wanted to compete in the Enduro Junior championship as it was the last year I was eligible for it but I wasn't expecting it to be quite as tough as it was.

"Competition at the top of the Enduro Junior class is really close. Several manufacturers have factory-supported riders which is great but makes a top 10 result a lot harder than some might think."

So far this season Si sits 15th in the E2 world championship standings with four – possibly five depending on whether the series visits Mexico in July – rounds remaining. Not every event has gone to plan but all have been enjoyable and challenging.

"I used to get down when I looked at the overall results sheets knowing that the top guys had smoked me on one test or another. The gap between the likes of Johnny Aubert and Mika Ahola and myself can be as much as one minute a test sometimes but that doesn't worry me now. It took Mika years and years to be as fast as he is now. They're great riders. Every now and then when I'm able to put a few factory riders behind me or finish not too far behind the top guys, that's really rewarding."

As well as competing in the remaining rounds of the World Enduro Championship, Si is readying himself for the restart of the British Enduro Championship – a series he'd love to win.

"As much as the team and I are enjoying competing in the WEC it's the BEC that is our main goal. Good results in the UK are important to all of the team's sponsors, especially Husky Sport. Winning the championship outright is something I'd love to do."

With just one round having taken place so far in '09 Si is well placed for a good end-of-year championship position but knows winning won't come easy. A close second to David Knight at the season opener back in late February ensured a solid start to Si's domestic aspirations but more good performances are essential if he is to stand any chance of going one better at any of the remaining events.

"The BEC is almost like a different championship compared to the WEC. There are very few special tests so mistakes are hard to overcome. Having Knighter back in the series this year is great – it gives everyone someone to focus on."

So can Si win his first overall BEC title in '09 as well as continue to climb up the results in WEC events? "I'd like to think I'm riding well enough to win the British title this year but beating David, Daryl Bolter and Tom Sagar isn't going to be easy. I'm pretty confident though – you have to be.

"Everyone is beatable and with so few tests in BEC events anything is possible. I'm well up for it. There are some great events coming up so I'll be giving everything to win. I'd love to be the overall British Enduro Champion this season."

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JOSH WATERMAN AND LUKE HAWKINS –
TEARING UP THE MXY2 CHAMPIONSHIP

JUMBO

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WE CATCH UP WITH THE TRIO OF BRITS WHO
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THE BRO SHOW!

WATSON BROTHERS DOMINATE
ELITE YOUTH CUP IN CUMBRIA

CONRADMEWSE

Ryan Houghton holds third
in the Jumbo ONK series...

...while Sunny Thompson's
one place higher

JUMBO ONK85cc

Series standings

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | Lars Van Berkel | 240 points |
| 2 | Sunny Thompson | 237 |
| 3 | Ryan Houghton | 228 |
| 4 | Bobby Zundorf | 223 |

JUMBO J E T S !

BRIT BATTLERS SET THE PACE IN DUTCH 85cc SERIES

Jumbo ONK 85cc Grote Wielen – the phrase hardly trips of the tongue! However, the Dutch 85cc Big Wheel series has been a real hotbed of activity this year for a travelling band of Brits with ripping returns for our guys who enjoy nothing more than slugging it out in the sandy Dutch trenches!

Ryan Houghton, Sunny Thompson and Michael Eccles are just three of our Euro fighters giving it large in the lowlands this season. Rage caught up with the guys recently to ask them about it but first of all a bit of background to the Dutch series...

It all kicked off at Gemert on March 15 with Sunny Thompson and Ryan Houghton getting away to a more than impressive series start. Sunny topped out on the podium at the end of the meeting, looking down on 16-year-old Bobby Zundorf in second overall and with Ryan in third it looked like a bit of a tasty Union Jack sandwich. And ex-pat Danny Hutchinson finished in fourth so not a bad day for the Brits at round one!

The following week the series moved on to Haale where Honda hotshot Lars van Berkel powered impressively to a 100-point, two-race maximum. However, with Ryan and Sunny again making the podium in second and third places respectively the top of the series table saw Sunny holding a five-point advantage over Ryan. Zundorf and Van Berkel were still in close attendance however in third and fourth places.

Round three of the series took place on May 21 – Queen's Day in Holland and a national holiday. But before that kicked off I had a chance at BYMX Little Silver to fire off a few questions to the three amigos.

DBR: After national rounds in both Holland and the UK, where do you think the racing experience is at its best?

Without any hesitation and with a bit of a smile from all three guys, Houghton, Thompson and Eccles gave me an emphatic "Europe is the best!" as their answer. "Far more chilled out," quoted Mickey and "better organised with more style," was Sunny's opinion

DBR: With the home-based BYMX Big Wheel 85cc competition being a hot number this year which series is the most difficult to win or do well in?

Both Ryan and Mickey thought the Dutch ONK series was the harder of the two but Sunny with a fair bit of past Euro experience thought the BYMX series the toughest.

DBR: If you could import anything from the Euro experience and transplant it into UK national racing what would it be?

With a cheeky grin on his face Mickey Eccles instantly answered "tons of sand" and when I pinned him down to a more specific answer he agreed with the other two guys that the longer races in Holland and the fact that they have two periods of free practice before timed training would be a welcome addition to UK racing.

DBR: With the benefit of hindsight is there anything you would change if you could start the season again?

On this one Ryan just shook his head – it's all going pretty well for him right now – and the Houghton camp think they had the preparations pretty well spot on. Mickey, being younger than the other guys, would have liked more previous Euro experience to help him qualify at every meeting and Sunny gave an answer that I really didn't expect. "Because I got a really good start to the ONK series before it all kicked off in the UK I think I underestimated the quality of the BYMX guys. As a result I think I started the BYMX season being over confident." Who says our racers aren't deep thinkers?

DBR: What are your season's goals now that we are almost at halfway?

Sunny has the ONK series as his main target while Mickey wants a top 10 finish in BYMX with qualification

and good finishes in Europe. Ryan has a full itinerary with the winning of ONK and BYMX gigs at the top of the wish list, then top three finishes in the remaining full-blown Euro rounds in Estonia, Holland, Germany, Italy and Denmark. And he'd also like the chance of doing the world championships in New Zealand.

Okay, now let's fast forward to round three...

Following a tough qualifying session with over 70 riders on parade battling for the 40 vacant startgate positions, Ryan qualified in sixth place from the B group and Sunny in 13th from the A group. But with both guys as much as four and five seconds off the times of top qualifiers Zundorf and Damon Graulus it was clear our guys were in for a tough day.

Mickey Eccles just missed out on qualification but with Danny Hutchinson, Bradley Ward and Jack Kelly in the final line-up the Brits were well represented as the gate went down for race one. Both Sunny and Ryan got away to disappointing mid-pack starts and after a crash Ryan pulled through from a lowly 26th place to eventually finish 11th, seven seconds behind Sunny in 10th. With both Van Berkel and Zundorf finishing in the top six in race one Sunny and Ryan knew the pressure was on.

In race two Ryan again had to fight his way through to get with the leading group from an 11th place position on the opening lap and Sunny was also on a real charge from sixth. At the front of the field Van Berkel and Brent Van Donink were dominating. Van Donink's 1-2 race card won the day with Van Berkel's 3-1 finish enough to take over the series lead.

But as the chequers dropped on race two both Brits had ridden magnificently to pass Zundorf with Sunny third and Ryan fourth. Job well done guys! The positions at the head of the table just get tighter and tighter with Van Berkel looking like the hot ticket right now. A classic series in the making then so watch out for the conclusion of this particular thriller later in the year following its mid-season break.

STERLING SILVER!

TOP CLASS ACTION AS THE BYMX SERIES HEADS DOWN TO DEVON

There are big BYMX licks at Little Silver from Conrad Mewse with three more race wins, Ben Watson cards his usual five from five, Ryan Houghton blasts past the chequers first four times and Josh Waterman claims another hat-trick of glory.

In the 65s Conrad now leads Henry Williams by 39 points and Ben has a massive 82-point Small Wheel advantage over Callan Cooper. In what's on paper the toughest division of all – the Big Wheel 85s – Ryan has a 93-point lead over his tightly packed chasers namely James Dunn, Sunny Thompson and Jake Millward. And in the Open class Josh Waterman is now 77 points in front of Jack Rowland.

With the leaders this year so out in front it's time to look around at a few of the guys a bit further down the field who are doing the biz...

Henry Williams is proving week-in, week-out that he's well capable of beating Conrad when he gets the drop on him as proved at LS and 39 points is not exactly done and dusted.

Before the season started we asked the question in the Rage pages could Ben Watson go all season unbeaten? Well, right now the answer in BYMX Small Wheels is a big 'yes' – but not for the want of trying by a supercharged Tom Neal who hassled Ben all the way in race one.

Jake Millward continues to be the surprise package in the Big Wheels and with Nathan Watson, Matty Fleming and Luke Norris all hitting big trouble at Little Silver on day two Jake has put himself right in there with a real top three shout.

In the Open section Jack Rowland knows he has to keep as much pressure on as possible and he made no mistake with a gate-to-flag race win third time out. It was his first race win of the year – could it be the start of a roll? Luke Hawkins was the other guy to break his BYMX duck and his last race win gave him second overall on the weekend. But with the injury-affected Mildenhall results on his card Luke will be working a minor miracle to get into the final three come the autumn.

Callan Cooper leads from Tom Neal



BYMX

65cc

1	Conrad Mewse	612 points
2	Henry Williams	573
3	Sid Evans	468
4	Will Keogh	468
5	Jack Camwell	459
6	Connor Hughes	455

SW85cc

1	Ben Watson	630 points
2	Callan Cooper	548
3	Tom Neal	533
4	Connor Clark	533
5	Robert Davidson	475
6	Liam Knight	468

BW85cc

1	Ryan Houghton	593 points
2	James Dunn	500
3	Sunny Thompson	500
4	Jake Millward	498
5	Nathan Watson	459
6	Luke Norris	442

Open

1	Josh Waterman	597 points
2	Jack Rowland	520
3	Daniel McCanney	470
4	Ewan McLaren	460
5	Connor Walkley	457
6	Sean MacDonald	438



Nathan Watson is unbeaten in Cumbria

NATHAN AND BEN DOMINATE EYC IN CUMBRIA

Not even a last-minute change of venue could stop round two of the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup from being another storming weekend.

Originally planned for Thoresway, the MCF changed the venue to Mills Moto Park up in Cumbria to cater for the amount of riders racing the series and the paddock area required. And it proved to be the right decision as the sandy circuit generated some brilliant race action.

Unlike the first round at Landrake where the EYC was incorporated into the Red Bull Pro Nationals, this was a stand-alone event for the kids and they once again excelled. In particular the Watson brothers – that's Nathan and Ben – showed their skills and sand experience by clean sweeping all of their races in the Big Wheel and Small Wheel classes.

With the wind whistling in from the Irish Sea the 65cc riders got racing under way in sunny conditions on the Saturday before a freak storm came through for an hour. It never affected Conrad Mewse though as he started where he left off at Landrake. This time it wasn't a perfect score though as he took his first defeat of the series in the fourth race when Henry Williams was there to pounce and be the first rider to take points off Conrad.

The little men were awesome all weekend as they fought the deep sand with the racing so tight the battles for the podium went down to the wire. In the end it was Williams who came in behind Mewse with Jack Camwell taking the final step on the podium.

The SW class was a one-man show as Ben Watson continued his domination of the series with a five-moto clean sweep. He had to work harder in the last moto after a crash but the PAR Honda rider was always in a class of his own. After a first race sixth Mathew Callaghan got it together to take the runner up spot in his remaining races for second overall.

The final spot on the podium was a great four-way battle between Connor Clark, Tom Neal, Liam Knight and Chubbie Hammond and after plenty of back and forth action that's the order they finished.

To make sure there were equal bragging rights in the Watson household, big brother Nathan matched his younger brother all the way with a devastating performance in the BW class. The battle was for second and that went to Aaron Pison who was racing a borrowed bike after his had been stolen. He also ended the day holding the series leader red plate.

Landrake winner Sunny Thompson had a mixed bag of results – the highlight being a couple of second places – but he had a disappointing 12th in the final moto which cost him his championship lead although he still finished on the podium.

Lewis Trickett kept hold of his championship lead with another overall win but he was pushed all the way by Gary Sharp and Christian 'Turbo' Taylor. Once again Lewis was quick out of the blocks in most of his races but unlike the opening round at Landrake he couldn't break away on the rough and gnarly circuit and only managed one race win while Sharp and 'Turbo' shared the other two motos.

Luke Hawkins was hoping to start where he finished off at Landrake when he won the final two motos but it wasn't to be, the best he could manage was a brace of second places for third overall.

With no Red Bull Pro Nationals for them to contend on the Sunday the Open class riders had the full five races towards their championship and it's now Alex Rockwell who leads the series. Rockwell and his team-mate Daniel McCanney made the short trip across the Irish Sea from the Isle of Man to make it a Manx one-two.

Rockwell was another rider who dominated the weekend with four out of five race wins, although he was pushed early in all races – more often than not by his team-mate McCanney. Will Worden found himself up on the box in third after Lewis Tombs failed to finish the final race.

Alfie Smith couldn't find the form that saw him finish second overall at the opening round and ended the day fifth with Warwick French riding consistent all weekend to take sixth overall.

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WATERMAN AND HAWKINS LEAD THE WAY IN MX2

With round three of the ACU's MX2 competition just about to explode onto the Hawkstone Park dirt this very weekend – June 14 – it's well worth having a quick look back at the two previous years' incarnations.

And while we're at it, let's have a sneaky peep forward to July because if all goes to plan there's the mouth-watering prospect of what could well be the shoot-out to end all shoot-outs at the fourth and final round at Foxhill.

In one respect so far the '09 version of the championship is totally unrecognisable from the offerings dished up in '07 and again in '08. This year consistency rules absolutely as in no other year before. The facts speak for themselves!

Quite amazingly, '07 and '08 produced 13 different individual race winners from the 16 races run. This season we've just two winners from four outings at Langrish and Brampton. With blisteringly consistent form Josh Waterman and Luke Hawkins have already joined a select band of racers who have in the past two seasons managed to bag a couple of race wins each. The other two-time individual race winners are Graeme Irwin who carded a pair in '07 followed by Edward Allingham and Scott Elderfield last year.

Back to this year then and with Waterman and

Hawkins dominating to such a total extent they presently hold a joint lead over the competition that will be difficult for anyone else to challenge. With a 1-2-2-1 race card so far for Waterman and 2-1-1-2 for Hawkins, both guys are tied together with 94 points each after two rounds and hold a more than comfortable 29-point advantage over Connor Walkley in third.

A truly epic climax to the series is a real possibility then if both guys can keep this magnificent cliff-hanger sequence rolling through the Hawkstone sand and all the way to the final races around Foxhill. It could well be the closest ever finish to a senior youth championship!

Elsewhere in the series as already mentioned, Team Green's Connor Walkley is holding third place but he's having a far from easy time of it this year with a back injury picked up at EYC Landrake still being a bit of a niggle. Ewan McClaren loves the sand – as does Gary Sharp – and both guys rammed that point home perfectly with killer displays at Brampton so look out for the two flying Scots in Shropshire as they try to improve on their championship standings.

But with all due respect to all the other runners at Hawkstone, most eyes will be focused on the Josh Waterman and Luke Hawkins head-to-head...



Luke Hawkins is joint leader

MX2

Series standings

1 Josh Waterman	94
2 Luke Hawkins	94
3 Connor Walkley	65
4 Steven Smyth	57
5 Ewan McLaren	56
6 Lewis Abbott	50

The well travelled Aaron Pison



© Ian Roxburgh

JOURNEYMAN!

TRAINS, PLANES AND AUTOMOBILES KEEP PIPON RIPPIN'...

How do you get to a motocross meeting? Plane? Train? Motorhome? Well current BW85 Elite Cup leader Aaron Pison uses all three.

For major events Aaron will leave school on Thursday afternoon and fly from his home in Jersey into Gatwick Airport where he will then travel via the Gatwick Express and Central Line to sponsor Vince Martin's house. After a short break the road journey then starts with Aaron attending major events all over the country.

Monday mornings are also tough as at 5am the return journey starts allowing Aaron to be back at school in Jersey by mid-morning. This is all the more impressive as the recently turned 15-year-old mostly makes this trip on his own as his father has to remain in Jersey due to work commitments.

A day prior to the last round of the Elite Youth

Cup at Haverigg disaster struck when both of Aaron's Evo Tech-tuned and prepared bikes were stolen. This forced the team, with the help of top tuner Matt Hutchins, to attempt to source a bike at late notice. Thankfully, fellow Evo Tech racer and current BSMA BW85 points leader Jordan Dival and his father Paul kindly offered the use of their bikes. This enabled Aaron to race to second overall at Haverigg and secure the red plate going into round three at Whitby.

Aaron and Martin Racing would both like to thank Jordan and his family for being so generous in offering use of their bikes – such actions highlight the true sportsmanship and helpfulness of people involved in our sport. Aaron would also like to thank Matt Hutchins of Evo Tech for supplying such fantastic bikes along with Tim and Sharon Watling and the Martin family for their continued help and support.

MEWSE SENSATION!



HE'S DROPPED JUST ONE RACE IN THE FIRST TWO ROUNDS OF THE EYC SO WE DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO CATCH UP WITH 10-YEAR-OLD TORNADO CONRAD MEWSE...

In recent years we've had some great young talent coming through the youth ranks here in the UK. Riders like Tommy Searle and Max Anstie have honed their skills and gone on to the big league as the sport seems to get more of a young man's thing every year!

With that in mind, one kid to look out for is pocket dynamo Conrad Mewse. The polite and super-stylish 10-year-old from Shepton Mallet in Somerset has been trailing a blaze so far this season, particularly in the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup where he's only lost one race in the first two rounds. It's obvious the kid has got great technique but we wanted to find out more about Conrad – so we did! Here's what he had to say...

DBR: Conrad, your season is going great so far. Tell us how that feels and what you've done to prepare for it?

CM: "I've been doing lots of riding in the winter on sand tracks at Preston and Dunkerque in France. It's good for your balance and it's harder to ride so it make you stronger and when you come to ride dirt it makes it seem a little easier."

DBR: You came out swinging at the first Red Bull Elite Youth Cup at Landrake and have been dominant in the series since. Does it feel good seeing yourself on their videos?

CM: "I love it! It's brilliant, especially when the pro riders are there. I like watching them and there were a lot of people at the first race. I don't mind seeing myself on the videos when I'm riding but it's weird when I see myself on video talking and knowing people are watching, it's all new to me."

DBR: Do you think you can learn anything from racing alongside the pros when they race on the same day? Do you feel nervous racing in front of them and a bigger crowd?

CM: "Yeah, watching the pros is really good – they're so fast! I like to watch them skip the whoops and how they sometimes use the bumps to bounce over the other ones and change lines. I try to copy them. I don't get nervous once the gate drops but I always have that funny feeling when I'm on the startline."

DBR: What do you think it takes to be a champion?

CM: "I think it takes a lot of training because it's really difficult and there will always be loads of other good riders. You need to eat well, I think that helps. Also, sleeping well before the race because it takes so much energy to be good."

DBR: You have a great riding style, do you try and base that on anyone else or does it come natural?

CM: "Thanks! I think it's a little bit of both. When I train I try to work on my technique from what I've learnt from other riders. Justin Morris trains me and I've learnt a lot from him."

DBR: If you could bunk off school to ride your bike would you?

CM: "No. School is really important because I've got to learn how to count money!"

DBR: Do you feel different to your school friends because you race motocross – do they treat you differently?

CM: "No, not really. I don't really talk about it much at school because my school mates don't ride or understand. When we asked my school if we could have some days off to go training they were really surprised to hear how well I was doing and that I was travelling all over the country."

DBR: Obviously motocross is about having fun but away from that what are your interests when you're not at school?

CM: "I love riding my BMX and playing football and they both help me with MX. Especially BMX for timing and jumping."

DBR: What did you last do to get told off and when was it?

CM: "Today! My mum told me off because she said I was sulking because I didn't get what I wanted!"

DBR: Who are your best friends at racing and have you ever stuffed any of them on the track?

CM: "There's loads but the only one that I've kind of stuffed is Sid Evans so I guess he owes me one!"

DBR: Which championship would you most like to win, what factory team would you like to be part of and what MX clothing company would you most like to be sponsored by?

CM: "I'd love to be a pro riding for Factory KTM wearing TLD kit and win the world championship. That's my dream."



Billy and the poorly fumb!

Words by Billy MacKenzie Art by Robin Keys

Well, nothing great to report as I'm probably having one of my worst seasons to date. So sit back, get the Kleenex out and have a right good sob for me while I play my violin...

It all started one day when young Billy was looking forward to riding his motorbike on the weekend. He had travelled aaaaaaall the way to sunny Portugal with his Fox bass in tow singing happy tunes with a big smile upon his pretty face. Unbeknown to him though, the weekend wouldn't be quite as he planned...

He jumped aboard his red Honda racing machine and set off for his pre-qualifying practice like a bullet from a gun! He was ripping round the rough, rutty corners and flying through the air over the great obstacles that lay before him. He was having the best fun ever and was riding really fast to qualify for the great race on Sunday. But then disaster struck! He landed from a big tabletop jump and went too fast into the left-hander corner. His Pirelli knobby tyre couldn't withstand the pressure on the slippery surface of the race track and inevitably he lost control of the machine and plummeted to ground with a THUD! At first he was angry with himself because he had crashed but as he sat up from the red Asveda soil he realised his thumb was hurting and this made him sad.

He managed to qualify for the great race on Sunday but the pain in his thumb was too much for him to bear and he didn't make it to the finish line. So back home he went, holding his hand and went to see Uncle Doctor who told him to do lots of exercise to make it right. And that's what young Billy did, napped isament and all...

Then it was Friday once more and Billy sat back on a plane and travelled back to Spain. Ahhhh, beautiful and sunny Spain. Young Billy sat back on his red Honda racing machine and raced his heart out, even if the thumb hurt. Uncle Doctor gave him an injection and it made young Billy smile. Things looked brighter. But again disaster struck in the great race on Sunday! In a left-hander corner before a jump something hard and big and blue crashed into him and when he got the dirt out of his eyes it was Tony Caroli hanging from his arm by his teeth! He shook him off and jumped back on his big red Honda racing machine and raced as fast as he could, finishing in 11th. The second race was much better though... He sat on his big red machine and never looked back, only because the thumb hurt again did he finish in fifth.

With a happy smile young Billy sat back on the plane because the team was happy and it was a good result and Malory was just around the corner! But first he had to see Uncle Doctor again to let him sew his thumb back on. After he was stitched back together, young Billy sat told to exercise his thumb and ride his bicycle and work out in the gym until it was time for him to set into his van to drive to Malory. And that's what he did.

Malory was again a weekend full of ups and downs. Young Billy set off for his pre-qualifying practice again and qualified in ninth, cheered on by the spectators. But the qualifying race was a mess again. Off he went on his big red Honda racing machine around the start corner and everything just went wrong. He very nearly fell off his steed, he was hanging on for dear life and yet everyone ran into him. His hand hurt a lot, his throttle didn't work so well and his front brake was broken but he didn't give up...ooooo, young Billy ripped around the track, floated over the jumps and flew through the dusty corners and came 12th! With a broken bike!

Young Billy was pleased with that.

And then the great race on Sunday came around again so young Billy went to see Uncle Doctor for his injection for his thumb but Uncle Doctor didn't do it right the first time around. Bad Uncle Doctor! Young Billy had to pull out of the race because he crashed hard and hurt his thumb again and he was sad. He went back to Uncle Doctor and asked him to do it right this time and Uncle Doctor did. This time young Billy's race went just like the one in Spain. The red Honda racing machine roared out of the start and shot off like a rocket. He hung on - every lap was tougher than the last - but in the end he finished fifth, just like in Spain. That made young Billy happy because the fans were happy and the team were happy and Uncle Doctor did everything right.

THE END

Okay, so I lied about the Kleenex! Things can only get better from here. The thumb hurts like hell but the injections help a little. France is around the corner and all I can do is get more injections until it all heals up and I'm me again. Right at the top!



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